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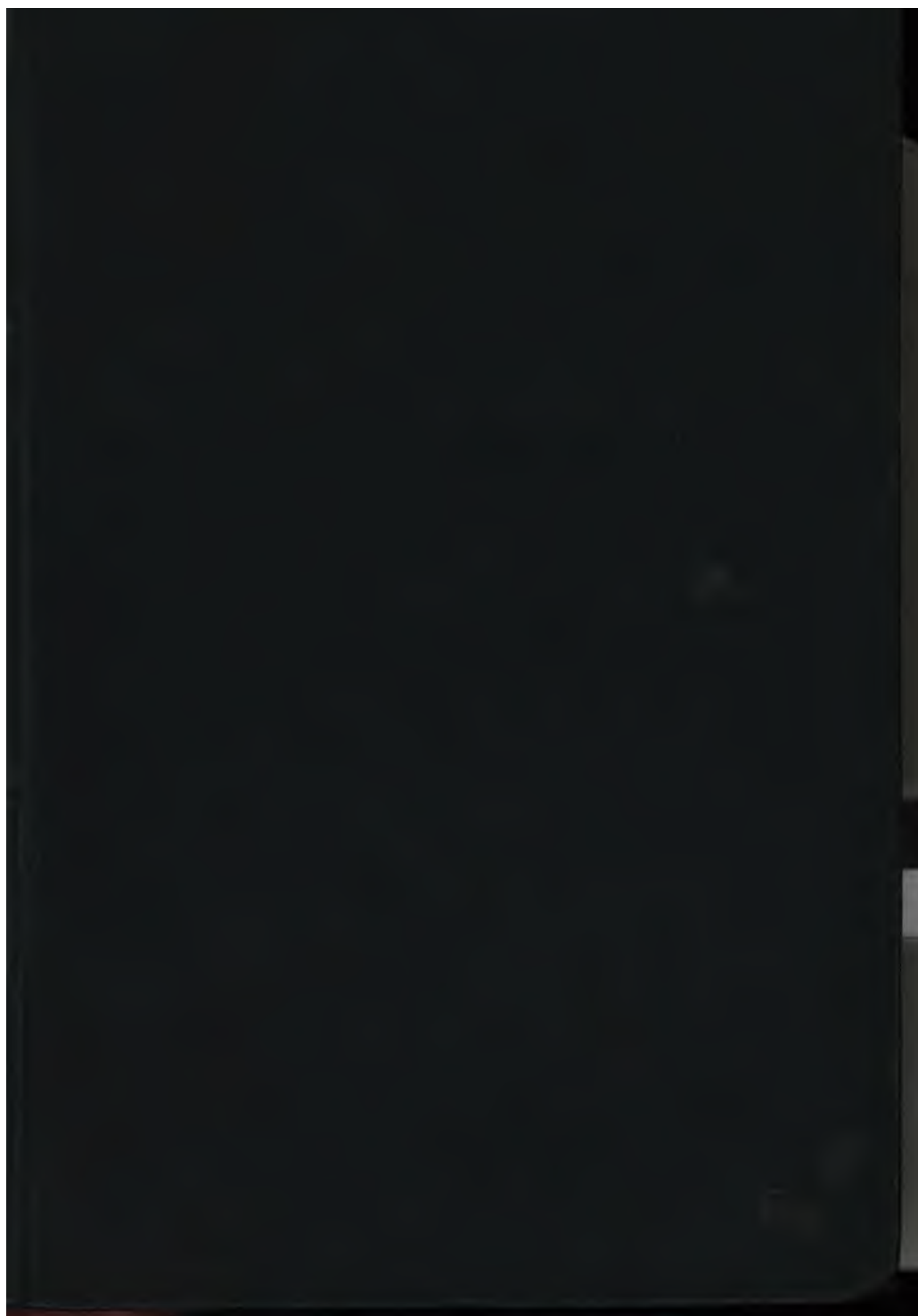
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LOVE IN ITS TENDERNESS

**“Truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness,
These are the offerings to lay on His shrine.”**

LOVE IN Its TENDERNESS

IDYLLS OF
ENOCHDHU

By J. R. AITKEN

"The greatest of these is love"

ALEXANDER GARDNER

Publisher to Her late Majesty Queen Victoria

Paisley; and Paternoster Square, London

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TO MOTHER

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OF A YOUNG MINISTER

I.

A VISION OF THE CROSS.

HE was an impressionable lad, and came to Enochdhu with a great ideal, inspired by the force of his father's life and the memory of a comrade's death.

David Scott and he had started their course together, but the brilliant genius of David had carried him to its close a year before our young minister. He was the first man of his year, and in philosophy, especially, as later in theology, had won himself a name. A fine thinker, afterwards Master of Baliol, pronounced him the most brilliant student of his time, and prophesied a great career for him. Of rare mental gifts, David had also a gentle heart, easily touched, generous, and impulsive. On accepting a "call," therefore,

A Vision of the Cross.

his friends expected much of him. But Fate had dark days for them, and bitter disappointment for the young minister, especially.

During the Christmas vacation he went to see his brilliant friend, and found him in great spirits, full of the glory of service, and loud in his praise of the Cross.

"It's a grand work, Anderson, a task for the gods. The joy it brings is deep and spreading, and the hopes of the Christ inspiring. When the sight of a congregation awes me, and I'm overwhelmed by the thought of their needs, their sins, and sorrows, and know that no philosophy, no theology can help them much, consolation and hope come only from the Cross."

So Scott declared on Christmas day, as arm in arm they went to visit a boy sick of a fever. He took the little one by the hand outstretched to welcome him, and smiled as he stroked the burning head, and prayed a silent prayer. But he went home, and sickened, and died, and was buried not many days after the child. The young minister

A Vision of the Cross.

followed the body to the grave, broken-hearted, and cried against God, and wondered. When the oaken case was lowered, a shower of snow came on and covered it. Then the sun burst through the clouds and illumined the lily-cross that lay on the coffin among the snow. The young minister saw it, beheld it through his tears as a vision from the grave, and swore fidelity to the Cross, amid the sunshine and the snow, with a pure white lily in his hand.

The force of his father's life, too, had made a deep mark on the young minister's mind. Puritan and Calvinist to boot, he yet glorified his creed by his life. Strong and imperious, even cruel and tyrannical in thought, yet was he gentle as a child and loving as a woman in his life. His solicitude for his college-lad was great. Often did he enter the study secretly, and pray over his son's books with tears.

"O Lord, tak' the laddie in hand, gin Ye esteem him worthy, and create in him a hert like his mither's. Sanctify his learnin' and

A Vision of the Cross.

mak' him wise. But abune a' things, may he see the Cross o' Christ, and glory in it."

The day the young minister got his "call," the old man came into the room and wept. On the table lay the *Herald*, with this proudly underlined:—

"The Rev. James Anderson, M.A., probationer, has received a hearty and unanimous call to the Church of Enochdhu."

For the young minister, glad with the joy of acceptance, he was troubled and anxious that day.

"I ken ye're honest, laddie, an' I'm prood o' your gifts. I ken ye're earnest an' hae the hert tae dae guid. I ken ye can speak weel, an' I think the folk 'll like ye. But, oh laddie, gin ye wad be ony use in the worl', an' no' hae red cheeks at the Judgment, ye maun honour the Cross o' Christ. In favour an' shame, life an' daith, be true tae that. Else there'll be twa sad herts in heaven through a' eternity."

And his tears fell upon the printed M.A.

A Vision of the Cross.

For the young minister it was a solemn moment, fraught with holy resolutions.

And the heart of the old man leapt with joy as his son threw his arms around him and cried :

“ God helping me, I will, father, I will.”

He trembled, like a frightened child, as the *Herald*, proudly underlined, fell on the floor at his feet.

The young minister was neither a genius nor a saint, and found his vow harder to keep than he expected. The making of his first sermon tried him sorely. The conceits of learned youth and the presumptions of the young collegian were present in great force. They were clad in fine raiment, and proudly ran before the admiring gaze of man. An ambitious text was chosen, and leaping fancies loftily indulged. But in their midst appeared a Sad and Bleeding Figure with a Cross.

In shame that text was given up ; in weakness another chosen. With a prayer he laid his manuscript before him, and strove

A Vision of the Cross.

to put his heart into the work. But the vision eluded his pen like a sunset the painter's brush, and he wandered into by-paths sunless and dreary. A passage from Dörner called for quotation. Tributes from Renan and John Stuart Mill came up smiling. George Eliot would provide a fine illustration, and a poem by Browning make a grand finish. The composition grew apace, and might have done him credit in many ways, but somehow he could not rest satisfied. Page after page was written, to be re-written and torn up in disgust. Fine phrases and chiselled periods would not grip.

So he laboured till Saturday night found him in despair, with a heap of manuscript that lay heavily on his heart. He read it, and read it again, but it would not go. He altered it, but still it lacked movement. Greatly troubled, he flung the sheets from him with a groan, and buried his head in his hands.

Then appeared to him again the vision of a Sad and Bleeding Figure with a Cross.

A Vision of the Cross.

He started from his desk and hurried out and up the hillside behind the manse. The moon was shining gaily. The loch was dancing to its lead with rippling wavelets, silver-crested. The mountain peaks were sporting with the white robes of some passing clouds. The air was cool and almost still. The young minister looked upon it all, till Nature and Night cast their spell upon him, soothed his brain, and calmed his fear. And when he went back to his study, an hour later, a strange peace had come upon him. The Vision tarried and returned with him bathed in moonlight. Till early morning he sat and wrote as fast as pen could carry him. And, when he had finished, he threw himself down on his couch to sleep, with a sermon burning in his heart. The moon was just then dipping itself in the silver sea.

On Sunday the church was crowded to hear the young minister preach his first sermon. Folk had come from the hills and glens for miles around. A rough, but devout and understanding congregation they formed,

A Vision of the Cross.

of spiritual insight and knowledge seldom found in cities. Sons of the mountain and the flood, transcendentalists every one, even the young men could dream dreams, and see visions.

Eagerly they scanned him as the young minister climbed the pulpit steps, worn, be it told, with the labours of the night. The women noticed he was pale, and took him to their hearts on this account. The men waited till he prayed, and then got into sympathy. And, by the time he gave out his text, a solemn expectancy had come upon all :

“If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.”

He announced it with a trembling voice, and a look that made us feel he had knowledge of the burden. When he repeated it, substituting “Christ” for “Me,” in a tone that hinted penitent tears, we gave him our minds, and listened with our hearts in our ears.

The sermon was a series of visions of a

A Vision of the Cross.

Sad and Bleeding Figure with a Cross, He showed us Him despised, forsaken, yet taking up the burden in our stead, crying "Follow Me!" And it was so real that we saw the Sad One march before us, and felt the thrill of His cry. He held before our eyes the Bleeding Figure on the Cross. And many rough hands were seen to wipe away coming tears. He drew aside the curtains of the centuries and showed a great multitude, each carrying a cross marked with nails and stained with blood, men, women and children, rich and fair and great, poor and weak and lame, coming after Him. We saw them light up the Dark Ages, pass through the Fires of the Martyrs, and sing on the Moors of the Covenanters, till our hearts burned with chivalry for the Cross.

Then a strange thing happened. The young minister, carried away with feeling, seemed to lose himself. He grasped the pulpit rails with shaking hands, and gazed before him, as seeing things invisible. The congregation, transfixed, could not stir, but

A Vision of the Cross.

waited, excited, breathless, wondering what was coming. The elders, anxious and frightened, were putting their heads together, and two of their number were just rising to go to his help, when the minister's lips were seen to move again,—

“Ay, Davie! nothing but the Cross!”...

“God helping me I will, father, I will!”...

“Ah! the Sad and Bleeding One again!”...

Anon his eyes brightened and filled with tears.

A moment's further silence, and then he shook himself as if from sleep, gazed at us with blinking eyes, and cried with a voice that quivered with passion—

“If any man would come after Christ, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Him.”

In the hush that fell upon us we heard our hearts beat, and tightened our grip upon the Cross.

It was not a great sermon, or a learned, and, if the young minister had preached it in one of our Divinity Halls, likely enough

A Vision of the Cross.

it would have been torn to pieces by the sermon-critics. But it was a living and moving sermon. Every sentence was steeped in emotion, and every period throbbed with life. And as the kirk scaled, the congregation was wide-awake and under the spell of its power.

“He was on the Mount of Transfiguration,” said Archie Stewart, the shepherd from the hills, “and his face did shine as the sun. . . . And behold there talked with him two men.”

“It’s heavy laden the laddie was,” said Chirsty Robertson, ministering angel of Enochdhu; “but it’s guid for us tae bear the burdens o’ the Lord.”

“It was mighty,” exclaimed Fergusson, of Faskally, farmer and chief elder of the kirk, “just mighty, and worthy o’ the auld doctor in his best days.”

The white-haired widow of the auld doctor was waiting for him at the vestry door. There was a break in her voice as she spoke.

“It’s fifty years, Mr. Anderson, syne first

A Vision of the Cross.

I stood at this door and waited. . . . During a' that time the Name has been honoured ye ha'e magnified the day. . . . An' the Lord deemed me worthy tae serve him that was the shepherd. . . . Sae I've come tae say, laddie, that, gin at ony time ye're troubled or cast doon, ye maun come tae the auld minister's wife, and she'll count it a joy tae minister in turn tae you."

The old father was much lifted. He did not speak during the day, but his face was lit with the glory of the setting sun. At eventide his voice returned, and his eyes shone as he took the manse bible and blessed God, and said :—

" Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart, O Lord,
According to Thy word, in peace ;
For mine eyes hath seen Thy salvation."

The young minister himself went straight home, and from his study table's secret drawer took a lily, snow-stained and long since withered, and kissed it many times. There were tears in his eyes, though his heart was full of joy.

II.

IN THE WAKE OF A VISION.

THE vision of the Cross lingered with the young minister, and became a source of leading and consolation. His impressionable heart was swayed by it, and a holy sentiment created in him, of the kind we associate with the neophytes of apostolic times. His youthful enthusiasm, linked with the deep religious possibilities of his nature, fired the sentiment to a passion. The tenderest chords of his heart were struck till his life felt the music of the love of Christ. Inexperienced and crude as many of his sermons were, it was evident that the soul of the man was right in the wake of a great vision, beholding the pathos and beauty of the Cross. From vanities and indiscretions he was not free,

In the Wake of a Vision.

but the Glen saw the glory, and loved him with all its heart.

“It’s a bonnie face the laddie hes,” said Archie Stewart, who himself saw visions—
“a bonnie face. The Lord is lookin’ through his een. Dinna ye see the wounds ablow the gowden croon, Maggie? I’m thinkin’ the minister’s got the open veesion an’ is cairryin’ a heavy cross.”

Through this mystic other-worldliness, however, ran a deep humanity that made him more serviceable to the Glen than a mere saint. And Maggie voiced it.

“The laddie’s far ben atweel, Airchie, an’ the love-licht’s bonnie. But it’s his nature I’m thinkin’ o’ maist, an’ the way he hes o’ showin’ ye ben as weel. There’s nae truth sae clear as the Incarnation when ye ken the minister o’ Enochdhu.”

It was this combination of sympathies that won the heart of the Glen—so human that even the ne’er-do-weels called him friend, so divine that even the best knew he felt the joys and sorrows of Immanuel.

In the Wake of a Vision.

“It does a body guid tae look in his een,” said Fergusson of Faskally, than whom there was no better man in the Glen. “When I see him comin’, ma conscience is aye lit up like ane o’ thae Catholic kirks o’ Italy. An’ the young minister seems to see a’, an’ wait for confession like a priest, or tak’ me by the haun’, penitent-like, an lead me tae the altar tae kneel an’ pray before the Cross.”

It was in the midst of a great sorrow Fergusson broke his reserve and spoke to me this way. When he had done, he looked confused, and hoped I would not think, from his use of such a simile, that he favoured form and fiction in the kirk as aids to man’s imagination. Protestant Presbyterian, good and true, he might have spared his blushes.

The vision gave the young minister grace to carry his preaching into his daily life and into personal contact with the Glen. His simplicity and sincerity were so evident, the grace became him well. We did not feel he was ever in the pulpit.

“It’s no sae muckle whit he says,” declared

In the Wake of a Vision.

Gordon of Tomnamoan, with a relish for psychologic study, "as a way he has o' lookin' at ye. Hae ye heard o' Skinner's doonfa' last Friday? He was pleadin' poverty, as usual, an' complainin' o' a bad season, an' bad markets, an' bad everything, when the minister says tae him, 'The manse is sairly in need o' repairs.' Skinner was born wi' a by-ordinar share o' Judas in his bluid, and maun aye be savin' an' tryin' tae get bargains, e'en in his releegion. 'Ye can pit me doon for ten shillin's,' says he, 'but I'll no' gi'e ye a farthin' mair.' The minister just looked at him as muckle as 'An' you worth yer thoo-sans!' When he says, 'Weel, as ye maun be gettin' mairried sune, I'll mak' it a pound.' 'Thank ye,' said he, no' complainin', but nice-like. 'Weel, weel, ye can mak' it ten,' cried Skinner, fairly bate. An' he tell't me yestreen that gin he hadna' run awa', an' got oot o' sicht o' the minister's een, he micht hae made it a hunner!"

"An' I saw him gi'e a tinker-bairn a shillin' on his way hame," added Chirsty

In the Wake of a Vision.

Robertson, "a thing that Skinner, o' a' the Glen, never did afore. I'm thinkin' the een maun been glowerin' at his conscience tae mak' him dae that."

"It's mighty," exclaimed Gordon, "just mighty."

"But the minister is bonnier still wi' the bairns," answered Chirsty, "an' his een hes won them a'. Aiblins ye had seen him wi' a wheen abune the schulehouse yestreen, rowin' an' chowin' amang the heather, like ane o' themsel's, ye wad ken his hert's guid."

"'Oh, Maister Anderson,' cried wee Mary Wilson, 'come an' play Zeenty-teenty.'

"'Oh, ye micht!' smiled a' the lassies.

"'Neevie-neevie, nic-nac,' says he, as they crooded roon him wi' bare feet, 'Neevie-neevie, nic-nac.'

"And then he scattered a poochfu' o' nuts amang them. It wad ha'e dune ye guid tae see them scammel. The minister laughed as loud as them a'. Then they got up and began :—

In the Wake of a Vision.

“ ‘Zeenty-teenty-hally-go-lum !
The cat went oot tae get some fun,
It got some fun on Toddy's grun,
Zeenty-teenty-hally-go-lum !’

“An’ if they werena formin’ a ring an’ coaxin’ him tae play ‘Bee-baw-babbety,’ the young hizzies, when up cam’ the boys rinnin’ an’ cairried him aff tae play ‘Dook-yir-heid !’ They had a tug o’ war afore they got him, though. ‘Keep the puddin’ hot,’ cried young Duncie Broon, as owre an’ owre they jumped, the minister as blythe as the best. The auld Dominie was watchin’ them frae the schule-hoose, an’ slappin’ his leg as if he wes crankie. But when it cam’ tae ‘Keep the puddin’ hot,’ if he didna forget game leg an’ a’ an’ start jumpin’ owre an auld stump aside the schule-hoose ! Ma certes ! but he wes lifted.”

“I wad ha’e gi’en a croon tae seen him,” exclaimed Gordon, carried away with joy.

“Then when he was dune,” continued Kirsty, “he warstled owre tae me, a’ oot o’ breath an’ beside himsel’.

“ ‘Of such is the kingdom of heaven,’ he

In the Wake of a Vision.

panted; 'Kirsty, of such is the kingdom of heaven!'

"I'm thinkin' the Dominie, wha hesna entered the kirk this mony a day, wes won by the sicht, an' near to the kingdom yetreen."

But the young minister was not always gentle as a lamb. It was not for lack of passion that he reached his effects with economy of speech. There are times on record when his words came, like a black flood down the Garry, with a rush and whirl that carried everything before them. Never was the kirk quieter than when he spoke with passion plainly. A hush would come upon the congregation when he came to personal religion, and entered into strife with our souls. With no fear of man, he was ruthless in exposing our sins. And so well did this good grace become him, we listened, open-mouthed, for the word that would expose our shame. Even ne'er-do-weels expected it, and did not look in vain.

Ballantine of Balintoul had the copyright

In the Wake of a Vision.

of the young minister's dealings with Mrs. McVitie for slander, and enjoyed his rights.

“Mrs. McVitie, ye ken, wesna’ born deaf or dumb, an’ couldna’ be accused o’ no’ usin’ her gifts. Her hearin’ hes aye been guid, an’ wes aince sae cute she could catch soonds by-ordinar low, sae low that nae ither body in the Glen could hear. When a story left her tongue, she wes aye faithfu’ tae tell a’ she heard, an’ her speech wes as guid as her hearin’. Sae she made mony revelations. And tae croon a’, her inventive faculty wes unco’ fine. Sae when Janet Graham went aff tae Lunnon, the mystery didna baffle Mrs. McVitie, an’ sune a scannel went roon’ that wad hae made the fortune o’ an’ enterprisin’ paper. When the young minister heard o’t, he cam’ tae pay her a veesit. There wes a look in his een she didna like. ‘Wha tell’t ye o’t, Janet?’ says he. ‘Nae-body,’ says she, qualin’ afore his een, her inventive faculty for aince forsakin’ her. ‘Dae ye mean to tell me, Mrs. McVitie, that ye

In the Wake of a Vision.

hae been sae brutish as tae cover a lass wi' dirt without a cause?' She trembled.

" 'The Lord avengeth and is full of wrath,' cried the minister, shakin'. 'There is one gone forth out of thee that imagineth evil against the Lord.' She remembered the passage and quaked. 'Ye hae sent oot a word that hes ta'en the white robe aff a young lassie's name an' put on the deevil's dress. Ye hae been guilty o' a cruel deed tae a fellow-wumman, whase hert's sae like the Saviour's that it drave her frae hame tae save anither. She gaed oot o' love, tae dae a bonnie deed, an' ye've branded her name wi' shame! Shame on ye, wumman, shame! The Lord will visit yir iniquity!' Ma certes! but the minister spak' weel. Mrs. McVitie's hearin' was fair deaved, an' her tongue, frae that day, hesna been heard in the Glen."

But it was admitted, on all hands, that the bravest thing the young minister ever did, was when he drove Buchanan of Crankie out of Enochdhu. The tenderness of the young minister's heart led him to forgive and pity

In the Wake of a Vision.

the outcast. Thus they came to him, as to the Christ of old, and he looked on their sin with saving eyes. He had learned to say, "Neither do I condemn thee," and to cry with passion, "Thou art the man!" The evening of the day he played with the bairns among the heather, a village lass crept to the manse door and knocked with trembling hand. She stood before him, weeping, her face bent low and covered with the blush of shame. Her sobs prevented speech for a time, and then she gasped, "Buchanan . . . o' Crankie." At the sound of the name the young minister shuddered. Once before a maid of Enochdhu had uttered it in that room, who now lay in the kirkyard with a babe sleeping on her breast. "Buchanan, o' Crankie!" sobbed the lass again; "Oh! avenge me." Then she sank on the floor and swooned away.

Next Sabbath morning the congregation was singing the first psalm when Buchanan of Crankie entered. They were at the fifth

verse —

In the Wake of a Vision.

In judgment therefore shall not stand
Such as ungodly are ;
Nor in th' assembly of the just
Shall wicked men appear.

For why? the way of godly men
Unto the Lord is known :
Whereas the way of wicked men
Shall quite be overthrown.

The minister rose, his eyes gleaming, and waited for a minute after the psalm had died away. A hush of expectancy fell on the people. Then happened what is unparalleled in the Glen.

“The way of the ungodly shall perish. The sinner shall not stand in the congregation. The Lord will rebuke him in anger.”

Then he descended from the pulpit, and came towards Buchanan of Crankie, the congregation amazed.

“The voice of a maiden crieth from the grave and calleth for judgment. Thou wert her murderer. The voice of another is broken to-day, and crieth, ‘Avenge me!’ Thou didst deceive her.”

In the Wake of a Vision.

The minister's eyes seemed on fire. Buchanan cowered before them.

"Once they would have stoned the maid. Now we would stone thee—murderer, adulterer, slayer of virgins. Yet we will have mercy, but drive thee from our midst, that thy sin may be punished, and the Lord visit thee with judgment. Flee for thy life, and cry to Him for mercy—murderer, adulterer, slayer of virgins!"

Buchanan rose and left the church, speechless and trembling, as if he heard the voice of God, and could not answer. The minister and congregation followed.

"Flee! and with good deeds work out thy forgiveness, through the blood of the Saviour. Flee! And may God have mercy on thee!"

So encouraged, the sinner fled, as if for life, the cry ringing in his ears—"Murderer, adulterer, slayer of virgins!" Minister and people watched him as he fled, running as if pursued by the Angel of Justice. In awe, spellbound, they watched. Nor was the spell broken till the victim had vanished. Then

In the Wake of a Vision.

the young minister was heard to utter these words in accents steeped in pain :

“Cruel? . . . Unmerciful? . . . Nay! . . .
For the honour of two virgins . . . he shamed
and slew . . . Yet may he find repentance
. . . as he wanders . . . in the wilderness
. . . and at last . . . obtain mercy.”

III.

BETTER THAN JUDGMENT.

OPPOSITION to the progress of the young minister arose, sadly and strangely enough, in two quarters, whence, above all others, he prayed it might not—from his own father, and from the Free Church minister of Enochdhu.

The broader sympathies marked in his son's sermons were the cause of much sorrow to the life of that good Calvinist. I have watched him in the manse pew, crushed and sad, mourning that he was father of his son, and doubting his own election, while the young minister was telling the love of the Cross with tears in his voice. I have seen him wandering on the hillside, and dropping on his knees among the heather, with uplifted hands, praying the Sovereign Will to change

Better than Judgment.

the heart of his son, and make him a chosen vessel. With wounded heart, and disappointed soul, he hoped against hope, till, at last, he became convinced that his own child was a son of perdition, a false prophet leading the chosen astray, and destined to drink the cup of eternal wrath! The fine humanity of the rough, old saint, could not bear it, and broke down under the strain.

When a man's creed has become part of his flesh and blood, it is broken only after much pain and conflict. When it involves the destruction of his own flesh and blood, it leaves the life in hopeless ruin. So was it with the young minister's father. His creed had worked itself into his life, and yielded only when the weight of his heart's sorrow broke through it. The agony was not unmarked by the son, but his vision of the Cross lingered, and he followed in its wake. Had the old saint had eyes to see the aftermath of that vision, amid the beauty and glory of which the young minister walked, tears of joy would have flowed. But, till

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near the end, he saw not, and sadly walked amid the ruins of his life.

Lacking the leading of fatherhood, the Free Church minister kept himself busy faithfully exposing the heresies of the young minister. Coming from beyond Inverness, the truth of God was known only to him, and the doctrines of Jesus capable only of one interpretation. The strength of Calvin fell upon the Rev. Donald MacLean, and became terrible when fired with burning Keltic zeal. In the young minister, with his winsome gospel of love, he saw the great destroyer of souls, come to Enochdhu, and he inveighed against him accordingly. To warn the chosen, and proclaim the points of the "true doctrine," was his daily duty.

Memorable, especially in the annals of the Glen, was the Sunday after the young minister welcomed to the fold again two that had been lost. Mounting his pulpit, the Rev. Donald was seen to be on fire.

"The wrath of God is hanging over Enochdhu," he cried. "The athiest and the

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harlot invade the Courts of His house and drink the Cup of the Lord unworthily."

He had listened to foul slander, and spoke in anger.

"The servant of Satan goeth about rejoicing. Fast and pray, ye chosen ones, that ye may not be consumed in the fire that cometh to destroy them. Guilty of the body and blood of the Lord are they, thrice guilty he who gave the cup. The wrath of God descend on him!"

Mary MacLean, the gold-haired beauty of the Glen, recoiled from her father that day. Still more, on the Monday following, when, walking by his side, she passed the cottage of Sandy Graham. The young minister had been paying a visit, and happened to come out at that moment.

"Look!" cried the Rev. Donald MacLean, "there goes the man who bringeth judgment on Enochdhu. The wrath of God descend on him!"

"Hush, father! Pray not so!" shuddered his daughter, as she hurried him by. "It is

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not ours to curse a fellow-man," and her eyes looked gently towards the young minister.

"The wrath of God descend on him!" answered the angry zealot.

The young minister heard him. Stricken, beyond ken, he went home to weep and pray.

Not long after this, Enochdhu, like the rest of the land, was swept by a wave of British cholera. Coming, as it did, while the country's heart was stricken with grief at the sufferings of her brave sons in the Crimea, it added untold sorrow. The alarming fatality of the disease struck sorrow into many, and left the work of attending the sick to a few in the Glen. Heroic beyond words were some of the deeds done during that terrible time, when men and women, without thought of heroism, all over the land, were found ready to face death, if only they might save some. Chief among these in Enochdhu were Sandy Graham, Janet, Kirsty Robertson, Maggie Ballantyne, the young minister, and the wee doctor, a man of whom God himself must have been proud.

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Among the first who fell was the father of the young minister. The darkness closed round him quickly, and no human hand could stay its power. But his sun set gloriously. "God is Love," he kept saying at the last. "God is Love," smiling. Spelling it over again and again, L-o-v-e, slowly, but surely, L-o-v-e, the gold and crimson of his life deepened into the grey and black of Death's impenetrable night.

His spirit had scarce entered the land of light, ere the news of the Free Church minister's illness reached the stricken son. His body had scarce been given to God, ere news came that Mary also was stricken. No one could be found willing to tend them; the Black Angel was smiting so hard. Therefore it came that the young minister rose from his mourning, and set out to do battle once more. The strong man lay in the grip of the foe, his lips purple, eyes sunken, countenance anxious—ghastly, his great voice changed to a low, unnatural sound. In the next room lay the beautiful Mary, who had

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nursed him, all alone, till she too fell before the scourge.

The servant had fled in terror. And there was no one to help him but the man he had proclaimed devil, on whom he had pronounced the curse of eternal doom !

Silently the young minister set to work to save him. The victim gazed at him with blank amazement, and ejaculated :—

“What! You! You come to help me!”

“Even so has God willed it, Mr. MacLean, and with His help, all will be well.”

So it came to pass the young minister watched over the life of his greatest foe, and fought for him against the powers of death.

All night long the Black Angel hovered near, and the battle raged. But as morn advanced, a sound, refreshing sleep came to the rescue, with easier respiration, and a return of the powers of life. Danger was then over, and the victory won.

It was otherwise in the next room, where Kirsty Robertson, who had come during the night, was busy with Mary. When the sleep

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of life was falling on the father, it seemed as if the sleep of death were falling on the daughter.

“Was the gold hair destined for the grave?” asked Kirsty.

Fearing the worst, she called the young minister hastily.

“It’s gey far through the lassie is, sir, an’ her sae bonnie.”

“Is there no hope, Kirsty?” asked he, with fear and love weeping in his tones.

“Unless the White Angels help her, none,” answered the White Angel of Enochdhu.

For eight hours the flame of life flickered as if it would go out, while Kirsty and the young minister laboured and prayed. The Angel of Life and the Angel of Death fought for the crown of gold in dubious strife, till, late in the afternoon, the flame of Life steadied itself, and Death slowly acknowledged the victory. Then, in turn, a sweet, refreshing sleep came upon the daughter, so that, when the father woke, her spirit was romping the land of dreams. And ever in her dreaming

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there appeared an angel whose face and voice were those of the man her father had called "servant of Satan."

It was seven weeks after the Rev. Donald MacLean preached again, and, by that time, the epidemic had passed away from Enochdhu. In the kirkyard there were many fresh graves, and the hearts of all were tender. The Free Church minister took for his text, Matthew xxv. 36 :—"I was sick, and ye visited me."

It was a memorable day, and God was glorified.

The sermon was mostly an eulogy of the heroism displayed during the cholera, and an apology uttered with breaking voice, for dishonouring one of God's most honoured sons.

"Conduct is more than creed (he said), and love better than judgment. To every man is given a vision of the Truth ; no man has yet seen God or touched save the hem of His garment ; no man is set to keep the keys of heaven, or sit on thrones of judgment ; and it is ours to follow humbly right

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in the wake of our vision. 'Glory and honour and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek: for there is no respect of persons with God.' Thus I desire publicly to acknowledge my former sin, and to pray the forgiveness of my friend and brother, the Rev. James Anderson. I was sick and he visited me."

There was joy in the Glen that day, joy unfeigned and full of glory, though many eyes were wet with tears. And no one rejoiced more heartily than the young minister of Enochdhu.

IV.

WAKING THE ANGELS.

WHEN the wave of British cholera passed from Enochdhu, it left the young minister much worn by his toils. A paleness settled on his face that the summer sun failed to redden. It was noticed, too, that his big strong frame quivered with the autumn winds and shook with the wintry blasts. On Sunday the mothers watched him from their pews with anxious eyes, and whispered his name as they prayed. And when he persisted in going about his duties in the week-time to the last, they would stand at their doors looking after him awhile, then turn and sigh, and enter into communion with the Other World.

During all that summer, the wee doctor,

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himself much worn by the trials of that time, happened to have business up the manse way, and often called to speir after the spiritual welfare of the Glen. Enochdhu understood his sudden interest in spiritual affairs, and did not expose him. The guileless eyes of the young minister did not see through his craft, or his ear hear the doctor, as he left, urging Kirsty Robertson to coax him with nourishing dainties.

“Meedicine? Na! I haena’ muckle faith in that, Kirsty, if the speerit winna’ gie the body its due. An’ I’m thinkin’ he’ll get plenty o’t sune.”

Throughout the summer the fight went on, and, though the paleness increased with the feebleness of his steps, the young minister would not acknowledge defeat. When autumn came, the Glen was deeply moved, and besieged Kirsty with inquiries about her charge. Most anxious of all was the Rev. Donald MacLean, who had become as a father to the lad. And with him was always the gold-haired beauty of the Glen.

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"Your time's comin' sune, Mary," Kirsty would say to her as they walked the garden while the ministers talked. "He poo'd ye frae the angel's grup, an' ye maun dae the like by him, lassie."

Then the Highland beauty would look away to the sun setting beyond Schiehallion with wistful eyes that saw the gold and crimson through a sea of tears. For though they had not yet told their love, or knew of it, Kirsty saw the light that fell on both their faces, and understood.

The fathers were much troubled, and discussed their duty in the kirkyard solemnly.

"It's the angels he'll sune be seein'," Archie Stewart exclaimed. "Canna' ye see the glint o' their snawy goons on his whitely face?"

"Na!" cried Gordon of Tomnamoan, with passion. "We maun keep him, Airchie. We hae mair need o' him than the angels!"

Thereat the kirkyard stood aghast a minute ere Fergusson of Faskally came to the rescue.

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"He maun tak' a rest an' gang tae the Sooth when winter comes. Maybe that'll dae him guid."

He did not say, however, that he had already taken a house on the mild shores of Bute, purposely to tempt the young minister thither. He did not say, too, that for three days he had been scheming to frame a winsome sentence wherewith to entrap his victim, and that on the road to kirk that very morning, he had stood and slapped his leg thrice, much to his good-wife's consternation.

"Sall! I've got it."

"Got it!" cried she, in alarm, thinking only of cholera, spasms, and a hundred other ills. "Where?"

"I'm hearin' ye'll be traivellin' Sooth tae your ain kintry sune, Maister Anderson, an' gin ye wad rin owre tae Ettrick, sir, the gudewife an' I'll be rale gled tae see ye."

And Fergusson smiled on his wife in triumph.

By dint of this and much fencing, Fergus-

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son actually succeeded in beguiling the suspicious minister to the pleasant waters of Bute. The Glen, however, never forgave him for his secrecy.

But in vain. In ten days the young minister returned little better for the change. His nerves were shattered now ; the passion of his life had burned itself into his brain, so that he could not rest, and must needs be about his Father's business.

Thus, till the flowers of the forest were a' wede awa' and Winter gripped the Glen with icy hand. Then, one wild December day, the young minister, returning from a holy errand, Schiehallion way, was caught in a snowstorm. Mile after mile he trudged in the deepening snow, and battled for his life against wind and flake. Like a fiend of hell the howling wind lashed the whited host with blinding fury against the holy man. Not even a sheltering shepherd's hut was there on that lonely mountain road, and no dwelling for seven long miles. So his only refuge, when beaten by the storm and nigh

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to fainting, was a cleft of the overhanging rock. Into this he crept, with numbed steps, and swooned away.

He must have perished had not Angus Smith the Postman found him there, as by a miracle, some hours later.

“Hoots, wumman!” he cried to his old grey mare as she shied in passing the rock. “Hoots, wumman! Whut bee’s in yir bonnet noo?”

For answer the mare stood still a moment, then picked her steps toward the rock, pawed the snow excitedly, sniffed, and neighed.

Dismounting, Angus came to the cleft of the rock, and started when he found the young minister lying senseless, almost buried in the snow. Lifting him into the trap, he covered him with the mail bag and rugs, and stripped himself of his own cape to shelter him from the blast.

“Heest ye quick, ma bonnie lass,” he cried to the old mare. “Heest ye quick! Ye’ve cairried mony a gowden screed afore this day, an’ mony a black, but noo ye’re cairryin’

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the hert o' the Glen! Heest ye quick! A bonnie lass is waitin' for the letter: I've seen the love-light dancin' in her een! Awa', then, awa'! We maunna let the border be black!"

How they got home, Angus never could fully tell. Twice they were fast in the drifts, and must have perished had not the old mare tried again, and panting, conquered. By the bend, at Giant Steps, she lost her footing, and nigh was driven down the slopes to the rushing waters of the Tummel. Near the bridge that spans the river, they again got fast in a drift, whence, an hour later, they were dug by the anxious fathers. So they reached home, amid the cheers of the frightened mothers of Enochdhu.

At the manse, Mary MacLean and Kirsty Robertson were waiting. They plunged him into a steaming bath at the wee doctor's bidding, wrapped him in blankets, and laid him in a warm bed. Then they sat down to wait.

"Ye did yir duty brawly, lass," cried

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Angus to the old mare, as he unharnessed her. "Brawly. . . . An' the border o' the letter wisna black!"

A long, weary night of watching did it seem to the anxious hearts of the women. In spite of all restoratives, the young minister lay unconscious till dawn. Then, as the gold-haired beauty was bending over him, he awoke, stared at her vacantly a moment, smiled gladly, and whispered—

"Mary!"

It was the first time he had called her by that name.

"Jamie," she answered sweetly, as tears of joy came into her eyes.

Then they saw and understood what Kirsty had known so long.

But danger was not yet past. The severe cold took his throat and robbed him of his voice. Yet he lay and smiled happily on Mary, and with his eyes blessed Kirsty the White Angel of Enochdhu. Then, as his voice returned, the fire burned down into his lungs and raged as unto death. The roses

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that bloomed on Mary's cheeks grew pale, as the wrinkles on the doctor's brow deepened day by day. Delirium came on, and the Angel of Death waited at the door with grim and silent face.

I have read the writings of the great mystics both in our own and the German tongue. I have read of the ecstasy of saintly men and women, Christian and Persian, of the rapture with which they beheld the Beloved, of the joy with which they gazed on the Eternal City, and saw the streets of shining gold. But never have I heard a soul speak with such love and passion of its Lord as that of the young minister in delirium. Heaven must have been naked to his sight. The sweet Christ of God passed before his eyes in all His beauty, and was met with rapturous joy, with words of holy adoration, sweetest love and passionate yearning. The will of God stood revealed, and His wisdom writ in characters of gold read of babes and praised of angels. And, in the song, the delirious minister joined.

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Anon, with the beautiful Saviour walked the creatures of this world. The minister was busy in the Glen. Now it was a bairn in white robes, like unto the angels, that came to its christening. Now an aged saint who walked with weary feet to lay him down in the kirkyard "until He come." Now a wandering boy, an erring maid, a weeping mother with sad, pale face, that called forth his sympathy. And to all he showed the Son of God and the glory of the Golden City.

Through all the vision yet another figure rambled. She was dim and wistful, like a holy angel floating over the altar of the Lord. But the tones of his voice, and the smile on his face, and the light that danced in his eyes as she passed, told their own love-story. When the wee doctor heard those tones, and Kirsty Robertson saw that smile spreading, they turned their faces to the window. Then Mary saw the love-light all alone.

The Glen waited anxiously for news of

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the battle, as eagerly as it had done during the canny time of the Crimean war. The doctor was much questioned.

“Hadden oor ain, juist keepin’ the angel frae the door,” was his only answer for a time.

But gradually the wrinkles lifted from his brow, as the young minister, slowly but surely, beat Death from the door.

The New Year had come, and January given place to February, ere he rose, and, leaning on Mary’s shoulder, walked to the window and looked on the snow-clad Glen again.

Then came the doctor’s opportunity.

“I’m judgin’ the sun is shinin’ somewhere in the worl’ the day, tho’ in the Glen we haena seen his face for mony a day. In the Mediterranean, they tell me, his beams are unco’ bonnie the noo, as he lauchs in the blue sky an’ skips owre the smilin’ waves. I’m no’ sayin’ that ony man born in the Glen wad need tae——”

He never finished the sentence. Gordon

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of Tomnamoan, a hasty man always, and rash, broke in excitedly,

“We’ll dae it! We’ll dae it! We’ll sen’ him wi’ the first boat, an’ see the siller’s no’ wantin’.”

And the fathers, carried away with Gordon’s rash speech, cheered him lustily, then turned on the doctor and cheered him likewise, till that frail body fled in great astonishment.

The Glen responded heartily. Never was I so proud of it as when I heard from Gordon how richly it gave out of its poverty. Skinner, a near man, whom it pained to part with money, sent a note with many excuses. On opening it, a cheque for ten pounds lay on the table. Duncie Broon, a poor shepherd with a rich family, brought ten shillings, and was half way up the hill again ere Gordon had recovered himself enough to thank him. Betsy M’Pherson, a hunchbacked charwoman with as bright a soul as ever God looked on, stuffed a pound note into the hand of Tomnamoan, and wept bitterly when, knowing

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her poverty, he drew back and hesitated ere taking her lordly gift. The smile that lit her face, when at last he did take it, lingered with Gordon many days.

Ere February had gone, the young minister was sailing the blue waters of the Mediterranean. By the time he reached Malta, he was a new creature, and, when he came to Alexandria, he must needs run up to Cairo, and climb the pyramids and gaze on the face of the Sphynx. Thence he journeyed to the Holy Land and came to Jerusalem, "the joy of the whole earth." It was Easter, and the great tragedy was being re-enacted in the minds of men.

With bated breath, and awe, and adoration, the young minister knelt at Calvary and gave God thanks—"He loved me and gave Himself for me!" And as he knelt, the Holy Ghost came upon him, and he lifted up his voice and sang—

"When I survey the wondrous Cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride!"

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And, as he sang, the great throng that knelt around, took up the song, and tightened its grip on the Cross.

The Glen often heard from him, and followed with simple joy his eventful journey. And, when he came home, the flowers were blooming, and the birds singing, and the sun blinking bonnily. The fathers met him at the station, and led him, sun-burnt and hearty, through the joyful clachan, to the manse on the hill.

In the evening I called and found him full of cheer about his travels, and still more lifted up about one thing.

“If you want to know how kind is the heart of man,” he said to me, “you must be a minister and fall sick. Then you will see the angels that sleep in the most unsuspected of men wake and lay their soft hands on your heart. Then you will behold deeds done and hear words spoken that love has touched and thrilled. Then you will know that the Son of God is moving in the throng once more, and will glorify the Father!”

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Ere I left, Mary MacLean and her father called.

“Welcome hame tae Enochdhu!” she cried, as she bounded into his open arms.

“It’s the bonniest sicht I’ve seen in a’ ma traivels,” he answered in her own Doric, looking gladly on her face.

He meant the compliment for Enochdhu, and blushed, with joy, as Mary took it for herself.

“Ye’re richt, ma bonnie lass,” he cried with pride. “Ye’re richt, an’ gin ye’ll bend your ear, I’ll speir a question o’ ye.”

Smiling happily, he whispered something in her bended ear. As he did so, Mary’s face lit with joy, and the love-light sparkled beautifully.

Then I heard her sweetly answer,

“Oh yes, Jamie! Oh yes!”

And I knew that a wedding was nigh.

V.

LOVE IN ITS TENDERNESS.

WHEN the passion of human love rose in the breast of the young minister, he thanked God with smiling face. Never before had he felt its power. Now that it took possession of his life, he came to understand its strength, as well as its beauty, and to marvel at the rich treasure God had put into every man's heart that only the white hand of woman can lay bare.

"The treasure is there," he used to say, "buried deep in the heart ; and, at the right time, there comes to each of us an angel sent of God to open our eyes and to discover the wealth of our life. The glory of life is within. True, that from the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders even, but true it also is,

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that from the heart come God, for God is love, and Christ, for love would leave its heaven and give its life for the sake of the lass it honours."

When the passion woke in the breast of Mary MacLean, it put a new face on the world. Hers was a nature rich and deep in feeling, full of noble and tender passions, eager to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to gaze upon a new earth where the sea is no more. And her too sensitive heart was wont to bleed when it felt the pain of life, and the crush of the world's sorrow. Sometimes when she walked the Glen and looked on a field golden with buttercups, or on the silver birch festooning in glory, or on the dark firs waving in the wind, or on the trout playing in the Garry, the vision of the world's sin and pain would come upon her and beat the tears from her life. But now she would often smile and cry,

"Oh, it is a bonnie worl', Jamie! Oh, it is a bonnie worl', a bonnie, bonnie worl'!"

Only the day after the young minister

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asked her to be his bride, Kirsty came across her in the garden, gazing rapt-like into the heart of a white rose.

“What d’ye see, Mary?” asked the White Angel of Enochdhu.

“I see the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I hear a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the Tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God: and He shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.”

And, when old age had whitened her golden hair, she never wearied telling doubting maidens:

“Next to the luve o’ God there’s naethin’ like the pure luve o’ man, for takin’ awa’ the

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sin and sorrow o' life! It mak's a' things new!"

They were simple and unsophisticated in their wooing. To both, love was a beautiful thing—God-given, sacred, and divine—of which, like as of a fair flower, no one should be ashamed; a flower that must not be hid or crushed, but held in modest hand to gladden the eyes of others. Hence the young minister opened all his heart to Mary, so that she wondered at the wealth of his love, and gave him, in turn, all the riches of her passionate nature. And perfect love cast out every fear. When Time laid its hoar-frost on both their heads, they still called each other by the name of "Sweetheart." And all who heard it fall from their lips, felt the love that throbbed behind the speech.

The Glen was thrilled by the beautiful sight. This was no sentimental exhibition of love at which men smiled. It was a new gospel the young minister was preaching, an evangel of pure human love that is meant to make life pure and sweet, beautiful and holy.

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The Glen opened its heart wide ; there was no mistaking the interest the sermon roused, or the practical effects it produced. Love was busy in the clachan that year, and rang the marriage bells more than once.

When the young maidens of Enochdhu caught them wandering through the Pass, plucking primroses by the way, or climbing the Ben, later, when the purple heather bloomed, they would watch Mary, and note her tiniest movements of face or limb, and lay them up in their hearts to show to their "Jamie," some day when they went a-wooing. But when the auld Dominie and Alan Gordon met them, they would stand and gaze after them till the lovers passed from sight.

"A bonnie sicht, Dominie."

"A bonnie sicht, Alan."

And thereafter there was always a long silence.

In the autumn of the year they were wed. The Glen was a mass of glowing colours. Never before or since have I seen the Pass so beautiful. But that, says Alan Gordon,

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was because I myself was getting wed that autumn-time and had begun to get excited. Be that as it may, their marriage was surely beautiful. It was in truth, a Holy Sacrament and a means of grace to all who witnessed it. It took place in true Scottish fashion in the home of the bride. A trio of sweet-faced children acted as bridesmaids, and Alan Gordon as best man. Mary MacLean was a picture of loveliness in soft white raiment, most winsomely beautiful. The Rev. Donald MacLean performed the ceremony. He was loth to lose so fair a child, but he gave her with a glad heart to the man he once hated. His prayer, after he had joined them in holy wedlock, made tears mingle with the joy in all our eyes. In the hush that followed, I looked away beyond Schiehallion and glorified the Eternal Father's love.

The last time I saw the "young minister" was in the autumn of last year. He was no longer young; his hair was white as snow. He was sitting in the manse garden with one of his grandchildren on his knee.

“

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“Tell me a tale, grandfather!” cried the bairn, a pensive boy, flinging his arms round the minister’s neck.

I stood a moment to hear the voice of my old friend, and found his tale so pleasant that I listened to the end.

“There was once a Great Man who had fought many battles and won great renown, so that there was none like him in all the kingdom. The Queen honoured him above all her courtiers and entrusted to his wisdom the care of the state. He had great wealth, and feasted daily on the finest of foods. He was high on the pinnacle of the Temple of Fame, and was worshipped by all the people. He had seen the glory of other kingdoms, and had drunk deeply of the cup of pleasure. But his heart was ill at ease, and his mind filled with a want he could not satisfy. Thus, one day he came to a river, like our own bonnie Garry, and sat down by its bank, very weary. The birds were singing and building their nests; the rabbits were playing about him, and the young ones

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were peeping from their holes, getting their first look on the world ; the bees were sucking honey from the flowers, and some ants were carrying a dead ant to its grave. As he looked, the Great Man's heart grew still more troubled, and his mind became full of strange longings he could not understand. He turned and watched the silver salmon leaping the falls near by, and listened to the trip of the water as it ran to the sea. And, as he listened, he fell asleep. And, as he slept, he dreamt this dream.

“ He was in the royal palace surrounded with great men and fair women. The chamber was shining with gold and precious jewels, and in it burnt a beautiful light that gave forth a pleasant odour. But suddenly the glory vanished, and in its place were dead men's bones, in the midst of which crept great and deadly serpents.

“ He left the ruined palace and fled from the city and came to the country. He entered a great forest, and sat down by a river that clave it in two. And, as he sat,

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many lovers came wandering through the woods, hand in hand. Their faces were made beautiful by love, and their words were sweet, and their aspect peaceful and happy. And after them came a troop of children, all in white, laughing and playing in the summer sun. But when the children ran away, lo! the face of the world was changed. The sun burnt dimly in the heavens, and a weird darkness fell upon the earth.

“Then, in the pale light came a Stranger, clad in loose raiment, with face sad and weary, streaked with blood and lined with care. There was a beautiful light in His eyes, love-light it is called, and, when it fell on him, the Great Man came under a spell. As he passed, the Stranger beckoned him.

“Fascinated, the Great Man rose and followed, wondering greatly. They came together to the edge of the forest, and looked down into a valley where was a great city. It was called the City of Sick Men. Every house lay open, and men, sick and weary and sad, lay moaning. And in some were father-

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less children clinging round their weeping mothers. By-and-by, as he looked, the Great Man saw a country maiden clad in rustic robes of white, pass in and out among the sick, and visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction. She stooped to give the thirsty drink and to whisper joy to the sad. And in her hand she carried gifts that she gave to the poor. And, as she gave away, she still had more to give. The Great Man marvelled much at this, and turned to ask the Stranger how it came to pass, when, lo! the Stranger was no longer by his side. He kept watching the maiden, and wondering how her hand was never empty as she gave her gifts to the poor. He watched her eagerly, and then he discerned dimly the figure of the Stranger by her side. And always, as she gave, He placed another gift in her hand. And, as He did so, He smiled on her with a face that was full of joy.

“Marvelling much, the Great Man hastened to their side. With a trembling hand, he touched the Stranger’s arm, and said—

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“‘Sir, who is this maiden? What is her name?’

“‘Love,’ the Stranger answered, smiling.

“‘And who art thou?’

“For answer, the Stranger held out His hands and showed them to the Great Man. They were pierced with nails.

“Thereat the Great Man started and awoke. He was prostrate on the river’s bank, and crying rapturously—

“‘The Nazarene! The Nazarene! The Conqueror!’”

“And what then?” asked the excited grandchild.

“Then he went to the Queen, and told her all, and said—

“‘I pray thee, let me go, that I may win the Stranger’s smile.’

“Whereat the Queen laughed, and called the fairest women of the court, and said—

“‘Lo! he would follow the Nazarene!’

“And they laughed him to scorn.

“But he turned his back on them, and

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went out, and sold all that he had, and gave to the poor.

“Anon, he left the city, and came to the country in search of the maiden clad in rustic robes of white. He searched till summer fled, and autumn spent its gold. Then, one day, as his heart was almost fainting, he spied her enter a sick cotter’s house. Her face was the face he had seen in his dream! He ran to meet her, crying—

“‘Love, Love, wait for me!’

“And she turned, and, smiling, said, ‘Come, for I have waited long for thee.’

“Then the Great Man took the rustic maid and wed her. And, as he left the church with his bride, some one touched him gently on the arm. He turned. It was the Great Stranger of his dream. And His face was covered with smiles!”

Just then Mary came out of the manse smiling. The gold had turned to snow, but she was beautiful still.

“Tea is ready, Sweetheart. Will ye come?”

Love in its Tenderness.

"Ay, Sweetheart. The night grows cold."

"No, not yet, grandfather! Wait and tell me another tale. Just one!"

"Ah, you are young, Donal'. The dawn is now on your life: it is spring-time still. . . . But for us the summer is past. . . . And winter is creeping over us with ice-cold hands. . . . The night will soon be here!"

"No, not 'night,' Sweetheart," said Mary, as the crimson sunset fell on her snow-white hair. "Not 'night.' For there shall be no night there. Say, rather, the dawn of God's endless Summer-Day!"

Then they smiled happily, took the child between them, each with a tiny hand, slowly mounted the steps, and passed within the open door.

OF WOUNDED HEARTS

I.

REJECTED OF WOMAN.

HE was a shepherd, and lived on a lonely mountain side, 1,500 feet above the level of Enochdhu. There was only one house, other than his, in all the wild glen, and that was three miles off.

Society he had none, save his dog and his sheep and a pair of eagles that haunted the mountain peaks around. The Ben, at no part very hospitable, was here exposed to northern blasts, and gave scant food to the flock over which he watched. It took a brave man, with a good conscience, to climb to Tynabruach alone, for the silent mountain sides and towering peaks were fear-inspiring, producing a sense of eeriness and awe. There were times when even his lone spirit was

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overwhelmed, and he would come down to Enochdhu for the sake of seeing a human face and hearing a human voice. On the whole, however, he endured bravely and loved the solitude of his mountain-home.

Especially was this so, since the great disappointment of his life, ten years before the time of which I write, when he came down to Enochdhu, and asked Maggie Ballantine to be his wife.

“Na, na!” she had answered; I canna dae it, Airchie! It’s owre lonely! Ye maunna tak’ me there.”

Her sister Mary, a generous and impulsive girl, with a passionate nature that drove her to high and holy thoughts of love, remonstrated with her, and called her “selfish,” “heartless,” “cowardly,” but she answered simply :

“I canna dae it, Mary. It’s owre lonely at Tynabruach. I wad brak’ ma hert for the sicht o’ a mortal’s face, an’ the soond o’ a body’s voice. It’s eerie enough in Enochdhu, withoot wantin’ tae gang up there.”

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So he went back to his mountain-home, rejected of woman, to live his life all alone, tending his flock and himself as best he could, cooking his own food and making his own bed, all through the weary years.

Only once did the light of hope illumine his heart. When Mary married, and Maggie was left alone, he came down to Enochdhu again, and asked her once more. There was more sympathy in her voice this time, but still she answered :

“Na! Airchie! ye maunna ask me. It’s owre lonely. Ma hert’s fear’t tae think o’t.”

So she sent him back again, afraid lest her life could not endure the silence of the Ben. And when, two years later, the passionate Mary died, leaving Maggie with a little Mary to bring up, it was thought an end had come to Archie’s wooing. To me, however, it was plain that he had not yet given up hope, and that Maggie’s weariness without the loving Mary, together with the feeling stirred by the little child, was open-

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ing her heart to thoughts of love undreamt before.

There were few men the Kirk-yard delighted more to honour. Summer and winter he came down to worship at Enochdhu, and it was rarely he was absent. When the wind-swept snow was lying deep on the mountain side, or the rain beating wildly down the glen, and some who lived near would scarce venture out, Archie Stewart would trudge the trackless waste and occupy his pew. On week-days he was seen seldom in the clachan, save when he drove a flock to the market at Kinloch, or came down for provisions. Then was he sure to call at Maggie's cottage, and speir if "the bairn was daein' weel," or "hoo a' things were ga'in the day." Living much alone had made him look strange and eccentric, as he was certainly unkempt and ungraceful, but more than Maggie knew that, under the rough home-spun she had woven for him, beat a heart gentle and noble. All Enochdhu knew, moreover, the power of his godliness. The

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Ben, we said, was his mount of Transfiguration, and on Sundays, when he descended, men looked to see if haply his face shone. That he held communion with the heavenly host, no one who knew him doubted.

His glory, however, was best seen on the slopes of the Ben itself. There he stood so near the Gates that he could see, without standing on tip-toe, the Great White Throne. I had it from Donald Forbes himself, the empiricist of Enochdhu, that Archie's transcendentalism shook the foundations of his rationalism, and made him long for a single hour of his life on the mountain. One day he came to me, greatly exercised, because he had ventured up the mountain to visit Archie and had seen strange things.

"He seemed in a trance," said Donald, "when I tramped up the Ben and found him outside his door. He was kneeling, and had his eyes fixed on a great dazzling cloud, white as a snow-drift. There must have been angels hovering round. Archie's face was shining. Suddenly he raised his hands,

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and cried: 'Ho! . . . come closer . . .
Hoo bonnie ye're a' the day . . . an' sae
mony legions. . . . Surely God is daein'
something great . . . an' the world 'll
wonder the morn . . . but winna think
it's His daein'. . . . Closer . . . let me
touch yer white robes. . . . Lucknow? . . .
Relieved? . . . Sent tae help the deein'
. . . an' lead the weary hame? . . . Awa'
wi' ye . . . awa' . . . quick . . . quick
. . . some puir laddie may be moanin'. . . ."

"And then," continued Donald, "he fell
on his face and cried in agony :

' "O God! When 'll Ye mak' war tae
cease an' men tae luve yin anither? Hoo
lang 'll Ye let them pit on their swords an'
dye the earth wi' bluid? . . . Oh, heestie
quick, an' brak' their spears, an' cause rebel-
lion tae cease . . . An' hae mercy on the
deein' the day . . . the women . . . an'
bairns . . . the wounded, . . . an' sair . . .
O God, hae mercy!"'

"When he rose," proceeded Donald, "his
face was wet with tears, and his eyes were

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shining through them, filled with heavenly light. Earthly things were not within his vision. You may not believe me, but me, standing in his way, he passed, without sign or word, and entered his bothie. I had seen enough, and did not seek to follow. Getting frightened I came running down to tell you. 'Lucknow?' What could Archie mean? Is his brain giving way? Or was he seeing visions and talking with the angels?"

Like the rest of the country Enochdhu was thrilled when the story of Lucknow's relief came to hand, but it was not unprepared. None the less, it wondered. Donald Forbes' empiricism, picked up with his quite English manner of speaking during a sojourn in the South, never was heard of more.

Soon after this, seeing how things were going with Maggie, and fearing lest the loneliness of the Ben might, after all, prove too much for Archie, I asked him one day,

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why he did not leave Tynabruach and come down to live in Enochdhu.

“Get thee behind me, Satan!” he answered, with a look of fear and trembling; “thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men!”

Other answer than this he would not give for long, though he offered this explanation at last :

“The mountain an’ the strath are the Lord’s: the solitary Ben, as weel as the crooded city. Folk are owre muckle ta’en up wi’ toons an’ croods, an’ sae miss the revelations that come only when we’re alane. The still sma’ voice wes heard, no’ by the courtier dancin’ wi’ the throng, but by the shepherd musin’ on the mountain top. An’ where the Lord hes placed us there we should bide. Ye widna’ ha’e the flock withoot a shepherd; an’ whut for anither mair than me? Na! I maun be true tae the Ben! Dinna’ tempt me; ye little ken hoo gled I’d be tae yield.”

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Then understood I that Archie, like the holy men of old, loved the solitary place, and shunned the world's delusions and snares, caring only for the vision of the Lord and the glory of the Other-World, in the doing of what seemed to him his duty. And I could not help thinking he was neither mad nor foolish.

When little Mary grew up, she came to like the strange man from the hills, and to count herself happy if he smiled on her or stopped to stroke her golden curls with many a wondrous look. Some days, however, he would pass her by, looking sadly on her, and sighing deeply as he went. Then would she be sad, and go home, and open her bleeding heart to the gaze of Maggie. She, in turn, would be touched with the child's sorrow, and tell her not to be angry with Airchie, for he was good and may be had reason to be sad. The child was not slow to catch the tender tones and to mark the tear that trickled down her face. Then it was always:

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“Ah, puir auntie . . . dinna greet . . . it's sair to be angry wi' Airchie . . . guid Airchie. . . .”

On one such occasion, in the year of which I write, little Mary was specially contrite, and determined to climb the Ben and pray Airchie's forgiveness. So up she went, all alone, her pure spirit not afraid, and her earnestness of purpose carrying her over every difficulty. The bothie reached she came to the door, and peeped in, making the big man start with her little cry.

“Airchie . . . I've come tae say I'm sorry for makin' ye sigh . . . an' auntie greet . . . I tell't her ye pass'd me by an' widna' speak . . . Auntie said: 'Airchie's guid . . . an' hes raison tae be sad' . . . an' grat . . . Kiss me, Airchie, an' say 'There, there Mary' . . . 'bonnie wee Mary.' . . .”

The rough weather-beaten shepherd took the brave little lass in his arms, and kissed her many times, playing with her golden curls, and smiling gladly the while.

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Then he talked with her, and showed her all the wonders of his house till the day was far spent.

Then he told her that she must not make Aunt Maggie cry, and led her gently home-wards down the lonely Ben, bidding her good-bye at last on the edge of the woodland above Enochdhu, and watched the golden curls disappear with a new-found joy.

So it came to pass that little Mary put her hand on two hearts, and brought them nearer ; and there is no saying what would have happened, had not God intervened.

Early in February there came a great storm, when the drifts in the Glen were many feet deep. The Sunday following, Archie Stewart did not come down to Enochdhu. The Kirk-yard missed him, and none more than Maggie Ballantine and little Mary. On Monday, when the sun broke out and shone on the Ben, dazzling with snow, the little maiden yearned to go and see him. Maggie pleaded the drifts, but the lassock wept till her misgivings on account of these

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gave way, and a strange fear took possession of her heart.

Then they twain set out together, the little child leading Maggie by the hand to the place she had shunned. Over the dazzling snow they tramped, up the wild glen and mountain side, at some places almost impassable, till at last they reached Archie's bothie, both of them covered with driven snow.

They were just in time. He was lying on his rude bed when little Mary peeped in, still holding Maggie by the hand. But as he was speaking, they waited a minute.

"Hoo bonnie ye're a' the day . . . hoo soft yer hands . . . an' white yer robes. . . . For whut ha'e ye come? Me? Na! . . . I canna come the day . . . I'm waitin' for somebody . . . an' I'm sure she'll come sune . . . Aye, aye . . . it's lonely, Maggie . . . unco' lonely . . . but ye'll come tae me at last. . . ."

The long pent-up forces of Maggie's heart broke loose. With a bitter, piercing cry she flung open the door and bounded to his side.

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“Airchie! . . . Airchie! . . . Here I am . . . Come at last . . . at last, Airchie . . . at last! . . .”

Raising himself with his waning strength, he held out both arms to meet her, saying :

“Maggie! . . . Maggie! . . . at last . . . I kent ye wad come . . . an’ waited for ye. . . . Hoo bonnie ye look . . . hoo soft yer hands . . . an’ white yer robes (they were covered with driven snow) . . . whiter than the angels . . . My angel . . . Maggie . . . Oh, but ye were lang!” . . .

Thus crying he sank back in her arms and slipped away with a smile.

Little Mary looked on with astonishment, little thinking what had happened. A wounded lamb lay by the burnt-out hearth bleating piteously, and would not be silenced. Maggie was sobbing violently, her face on Archie’s breast.

“Deid! . . . Deid! . . . An’ nae wife here tae help him!”

They buried him in the kirk-yard of Enochdhu, and Maggie mourned for him as

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though they had been wed, but with remorse
of heart. Little Mary, with her own hands,
made a white wooden cross, and on it wrote
these words—



II.

THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER.

SHE was a hundred and two years old when Archie died ; and she spelt her name "Stuart," after the manner of Prince Charlie. Every feature was puckered and worn, though her step was firm and her voice steady to the end. In that year, however, her sight failed her, and Maggie Ballantine, who wore mourning and acted as if she had been wed to Archie, came to look after her. With her always came little Mary Wilson ; and it was a sight that moved the Glen, to see the gold-haired child of seven lead the white-haired mystic, blind and worn, by a trembling hand.

Her strange and stirring history was public property, but Gordon of Tomnamoan

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recounted it with great precision. His father had loved her in his youth, and, though rejected, had kept on loving her till he died.

“In her day, ma faither used to say, there wesna a bonnier lass in a’ the kintry-side. Tae her bonnie face wes added a bonnier speerit that marked her oot abune a’ the women in the Glen. Syne she wes a bairn she used tae speil the Ben an’ cast hersel’ doon on its croon, an’ lie an’ lie, an’ listen an’ listen, an’ dream an’ dream, an’ be ta’en up by the Speerit into communion wi’ the Ither-Worl’. It wes frae her Archie Stewart got the gift ye ken : it ran in his bluid.

“Sae guid an’ sae bonnie, a’ the kintry-side wes efter her. But she sent them a’ wan’erin’ hame wi’ sair herts, till Donal’ Stewart cam’ an’ offered her his plaidie. He wes a college lawd wi’ a prood face an’ a supple tongue. He loo’d her dearly an’ won her hert wi’ a’ its treasure : the kintry-side, that had begun tae think she couldna love a mortal, opened its e’en tae see the wealth o’ love she poured on him.

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“But Donal’ wesna a Jacobite, an’ her faither, ye ken, led the braw lads frae the Glen in the fight for Prince Charlie. Sae he widna let her mairry him. The lass was fair demented an’ ran awa’ to Edinbra’ wi’ the lawd.

“In six weeks, she cam’ hame broken-herted. Donal’, she said, had gane oot tae college the week efter they got tae the toon an’ had never come back. Whaur hed he gane? ‘He hes forsaken ye,’ cried her angry Jacobite faither. ‘He wes fause an’ didna love ye,’ cried the jealous kintry-side. An’ tho’ she didna believe them the iron entered into her soul, an’ turned her mind.

“Then she began tae wander in the woods an’ tak’ tae singin’ sangs o’ love an’ the Jacobite rising. She hed a fine voice, an’ wes cairried wi’ her ploy. She wid pass ye by withoot a sign tho’ ye stood in her very path. But gin ye juist touched her wi’ a finger she wid wauken up, an’ smile bonnily on ye, an’ speir ye tae tak’ her hame.

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“Weel, twenty-six years later, Donal’ Stewart cam’ back tae Enochdhu. He had been press-ganged in Edinbra’, an’ ta’en tae the American war, an’ then tae the war wi’ the Frenchies, an’ hed only been let go when the Peace of Amiens was signed. His prood, handsome face wes sairly scaured, Yet, when Jeanie saw him, she smiled again, an’ forgot her madness, an’ nursed him till he dee’d. She followed him tae the grave, but, when she turned tae gang hame, her madness cam’ back tae her, an’ she ran frae the kirk-yard dancin’ an’ singin’ again.”

I myself, when a boy, have often seen her wandering in the woods, and heard her sing her songs. She was then far past the allotted span of three score years and ten. Her love for children was so well known that, though we looked on her with wondering eyes, we were never afraid of her. A crowd of us from school would follow her through the Pass and watch her unseen. She would come skipping into the woods, her white hair hanging over her shoulders or

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fluttering in the wind. Her voice was still musical and clear, though thin in parts.

Her songs were always the same, and were acted with passion and power till the dramatic ending came. The Jacobite songs came first, and always in this order. First :

“ ‘ Cam’ ye by Athol, lad wi’ the philabeg ?
Doon by the Tummel or banks o’ the Garry ?’
Saw ye the lads wi’ their bonnets and white cockades
Leaving their mountains to follow Prince Charlie.

“ ‘ I hae but ae son, my brave young Donald !
But if I had ten’ ”

Here she always broke off and seemed lost a minute in baffling thought. Then she would suddenly break out with :—

“ Come o’er the stream, Charlie, dear Charlie, brave Charlie.”

With this was mixed another, sung with a wild abandonment of passion and love ;—

“ O Charlie is my darling ! my darling ! my darling ! ”

Now the wild strains melted away, and gave place to a voice that trembled with feeling, as pain and sorrow fell to the lot of the Prince. First it was :—

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“ A wee bird cam’ to oor ha’ door,
He warbled sweet and clearly,
An’ aye the o’ercome o’ his sang
Was ‘ Wae’s me for Prince Charlie ! ’ ”

Then it was “ Flora MacDonald’s Lament.” She sat down by the Garry and sang it as if she were Flora, and her very heart were breaking.

No wonder that we were all Jacobites in the Glen! And, when her lament gave place to longing, every boy among us joined her, *sotto voce*, in “ Will Ye No’ Come Back Again?” On the last verse she always lingered fondly :—

“ Sweet’s the lav’rock’s note and lang,
Liltin’ wildly up the glen ;
But aye to me he sings ae sang,
Will ye no’ come back again ? ”

Here her own history invariably got mixed with her Jacobite feeling, so that, by a natural transition, the love of her heart now came out in song. No longer was she wild and warlike, but quiet as a maid on the arm of her beloved. First, it was :—

“ Jeanie cam’ linking oot owre the green lea.”

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But we were often in doubt as to which of two songs she would sing next—"My Boy Tammy" or "My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose." Gordon of Tomnamoan always held that Tammis Gordon, his father, was the "boy" meant, and that the Last Rose had really loved him in her youth far above all the Glen. For this article of faith Gordon fought every boy in Enochdhu and endured many bruises. It was the proud boast of his boyhood, the fixed creed of his youth, for the truth of which he shed his blood, and was ready to shed it again and again.

Be that as it may, every other boy was better pleased when she began :—

"O my love is like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June,
My love is like a melody,
That's sweetly played in tune."

For then we were always sure of the dramatic ending.

By this time, she had come to the Soldier's Leap, a great rock overhanging the Garry, by which grew a wild rose-tree.

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Pulling one of the blossoms, she would climb the rock, come to its perilous edge, sit down and sing "Ye Banks and Braes ;" repeating the last verse over and over again, and putting into the closing line an indescribable anguish :—

"Oft hae I rov'd by bonnie Doon,
To see the rose and wood-bine twine ;
And ilka bird sang o' its love,
And fondly sae did I o' mine.
Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree ;
But my fause lover stole my rose,
And, ah ! he left the thorn wi' me."

Long ere the singing had ceased, one of our number had crept up the rock to her side : few would have undertaken the perilous task except for her sake. One false move, and she would have fallen into the rushing waters beneath. We loved her too well not to dare much on her account. When her song had died away, the boy who had climbed up beside her, simply touched her on the hand. Then she would awake as if from a strange dream, turn, smile sweetly on the boy, kiss him, take his hand

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and slip down the rock and up the bank to where we all were standing waiting.

“ Guid day tae ye, laddies,” she would say, with love beaming on her beautiful old face, “ an gin twa o’ ye ’ll gie’ me your airms, I’ll be gled tae gang hame wi’ ye.”

Many generations of boys came and went during that long life in the Glen, but never once, in all those years, did her dramatic moment come without some boy being there, ready to risk his young life to lay his hand in hers, and save the Old Singer from death.

Of rarer occurrence were the visits she stole to the kirk-yard on the hill. Then she was cunning, and always on the alert, afraid of being seen. Clever was the boy who eluded her sight and peeped at her over the wall. Stealthily creeping to the grave of Donal’ Stewart, she would stamp on the ground and curse his name ; anon, cast herself on his dust, and water the primroses with her tears, crying piteously :

“ Donal’ ! Donal’ ! my ain dear Donal’ !
Whit for did ye leave me ? Whit for did ye

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leave me? Dae ye no' ken that my hert is breakin'?"

But as she grew older she grew better, and, after she passed the century, she showed few traces of her mania. And, at the time when Maggie came to tend her, once a year only would she ask to be carried up the Ben, and "doon by the Tummel or banks o' the Garry," or to the grave of Donal' Stewart. On the slope of the Ben she lay and communed with the Eternal as of old. And in the Pass she sought to pipe her songs. But at the grave she stamped and cursed no more, weeping only :—

"I'm comin', Donal' ! I'm comin', sune !"

Her visits now were restricted to her own garden and to the mountain side behind her cottage. And, as her madness went, and the gift of song was taken from her, her gift of vision returned with twofold power. In the spring of her hundred and fifth year, the year of her death, Maggie found her lying on the hillside speaking to God of the beauty and pain of life.

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“Life is unco’ bonnie, Lord, unco’ bonnie.
Ye ha’e filled it wi’ love, an’ passion, an’
crimson, an’ gold. Ye ha’e gi’en us the pale
saft greens o’ Spring wi’ the braw violets an’
cowslips. In the simmer Ye’ll gi’e us roses,
an’ in the autumn Ye’ll load the Pass wi’
gold. But whit for ha’e Ye let pain enter
e’en into Thy green pastures an’ beside the
still waters?”

Maggie looked about her. All she saw
was a wounded butterfly, of many beautiful
colours, struggling on a pale yellow cowslip
by the spring that oosed from the hillside.
There must have been some connection
between the butterfly and the Old Seer’s
words, for, when the struggles of the gaily-
coloured wings ceased, she cried rapturously,

“Thank God, it’s a’ owre wi’ ye noo.
. . . Pain hes been vanquished . . .
an’ God’s green pastures remain!”

In the late autumn of that year, the last
day of October, she was out in her garden
with little Mary. She loved the gold-haired
lass and talked to her freely.

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"I'm the last rose o' simmer, Mary Wilson, the last rose o' simmer. . . . He ca'd me his ain white rose. 'Ye're my ain white rose,' he said, 'an' yir hert's as bonnie as yir face. Ye scent my life wi' sweetness, Jean, an' keep me white as yirsell'. Noo the heather's broon, Mary, an' a' the roses in the gairden are faded an' gane. An' I'm the last rose o' simmer, Mary, I'm the last rose o' simmer."

By-and-by she came to an old rose-bush on which a few leaves, crimsoned by the frost, were yet hanging. By it she and Donal' had plighted their troth, and by it, too, she had kissed her mother the night before she went to Edinburgh. Not Donal', but her mother, was now in her thoughts as she plucked a crimsoned leaf.

"Oh, mither, mither, my ain fond mither, wha kept me an' loo'ed me when he wid ha'e sent me frae his door 'cause Donal' wesna for Prince Charlie!"

On she went thus rambling in her speech, laughing and weeping, till little Mary laid

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her hand in hers. Then she turned, looked down on her, and smiled,

“Oh, ye’re only a wee rose-bud, Mary Wilson, a bonnie wee bud that hesna seen the dewdrops glintin’ in the mornin’ licht mony days. An’ I’m the last rose o’ simmer, Mary!”

“Will ye aye be the last rose, grannie? The frost hes nipped the floo’ers in auntie’s gairden, and no’ a rose is left us noo.”

“Na, Mary! God ’ll put oot His hand ae fine mornin’ an’ pu’ me Himsel’, an’ haud me afore the angels, an’ smile, an’ say, ‘Bonnie is the last rose o’ simmer!’”

“An’ then?”

“Then the Redeemer ’ll come an’ say, ‘Oh, whit a bonnie floo’er!—a white rose redeemed wi’ red bluid! Gi’e her to Me, God!’”

“Then whit ’ll He dae?”

“Never mind, Mary, never mind. He’ll dae whit’s richt; o’ that ye maun be sure. Sae never mind. But dae yir ain duty, lass, dae yir ain duty. Love God, an’ fear man,

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an' look on bonnie things, an' dae yir duty.
An' aye keep mind o' this—the same Hand
as 'll pu' the last rose o' simmer 'll put a
dewdrop on ilka rose-bud till it's full blown,
an' till the time is ripe for Him tae put oot
His Hand again, an' pu' anither rose, an'
haud ye afore the angels, an' say, 'Oh, hoo
bonnie!—a white rose redeemed wi' red
bluid!'"

That night, before little Mary went home,
she knelt at the Old Saint's knee and said
her prayer :—

“Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me,
Bless Thy little lamb to-night ;
Through the darkness be Thou near me,
Keep me safe till morning light.”

“Whit's that? Wha taught ye that
prayer?”

“Airchie!”

“Say it owre again. It maun be guid
gin Airchie taught ye't. He had the open
veesion the Lord took frae me for my sin.
Say it owre again. I maun learn it for
mysel'!”

The Last Rose of Summer.

Mary said it over again and again, till the feeble brain gripped it word by word.

“Ay, ye’re His little lamb, Mary. . . .
But I’m the last rose o’ simmer!”

When Maggie put the frail old body to bed that night, she was surprised to hear her say, as never before :—

“Wait a meenit, Maggie. I’m gaun to say my prayers tae ye.”

She knelt at her feet like a little child, clasped her hands, and said :—

“Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me,
Bless Thy little lamb to-night ;
Through the darkness be Thou near me,
Keep me safe till morning light.”

Then she lay down and said :

“Guid nicht, Maggie! Guid nicht, . . .
till mornin’ licht!”

She seemed all right when they left her for the night—seemed as if she would live for yet many years. But there was frost in the air, and the wind was moaning over the moor.

In the morning little Mary ran ahead of

The Last Rose of Summer.

Maggie to the cottage, and stepped blithely in.

“Guid mornin’, grannie! Guid mornin’! Isna’ the sun blinkin’ bonnily?”

But Grannie did not answer her.

Taking her to be asleep, little Mary drew a chair to the bedside, climbed up on it, and looked on grannie’s face!

Awestruck, she clambered down and hurried to the door.

“Hush, auntie!” she whispered. “Hush! God hes put oot His hand an’ ta’en the last rose o’ simmer. An’ maybe Christ is juist sayin’, ‘Oh, whit a bonnie floo’er! Gie her to me, God! A white rose redeemed wi’ red bluid!’”

III.
A MATHEMATICIAN'S LOVE
STORY.

HE was a Mathematician from his birth, but the thing that settled his career was an experiment in optics. His father was only a shepherd, and a douce man at that, but he had wit enough to know the stamp of genius. He had watched over his son from the day he taught him "Three-times-Three." That was when the boy was two years old. He was seven now, and dipping into science and algebra on his own account, when the light of a candle showed the shepherd the path of duty.

The candle had been stolen and the experiment had been planned for a week. The Mathematician was supposed to be

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fast asleep, and the shepherd was himself in bed, when a ray of light came through the floor of the loft where his son lay. The shepherd rose, and crept up the ladder, and watched. The boy, in his sark, was placing the candle between two parallel plane mirrors facing each other. He took a foot-rule (it had been borrowed from young Duncie Broon) and measured.

“Three feet 'tween the mirrors. Yae fit frae the cannel tae the first mirror. Sae, twa frae the second. Problem—find the distance frae the first mirror o' the three nearest images seen in't. Ditto for the second.”

For a few minutes the boy was working on a slate, the shepherd watching him the while with growing wonder and admiration.

“Answer—one, five, and seven feet ahint the first mirror, and two, four, and eight ahint the second.”

Then the Mathematician rose, put the mirrors in their places, picked up the flint (lent by Gordon of Tomnamoan) with which

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he had lit the candle, blew that out, and went to sleep.

The shepherd stole down the ladder and crept to bed.

An hour afterwards his wife heard him muttering :

“It's no canny. But the laddie that'll get up oot o' his bed tae dae a coont like that hes mair in him.”

And next day he led the Mathematician down to the Dominie.

Dominie Baird (the auld master that ruled Enochdhu before my dominie came—a maker of men), henceforth had him for his own. He put him through a course of Pure Mathematics, and found him cantering through Euclid, Book XII., ere most of the school had entered Book III. He tried him with Trigonometry and Conic Sections, and saw the boy delight in symbols, like an artist in forms, or a child in toys. He went on to applied Mathematics and found his appetite keener still. The charm of science now lay on every problem, and the scholar

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ate greedily. The Dominie could not contain himself for joy. And, when he died, he prophesied aloud, that the nation would never lack a mathematician while Angus Smith lived.

He was a long, lanky, big-boned boy, with a great head that seemed too heavy for him and hung down on his shoulders, covered with a shock of fair hair. His face was open and simple, his mouth firmly set, his brow broad and high, his eyes deep-blue and hazy, as if filled with visions far away. He thought in symbols and resolved everything into figures. Mathematical problems were ever starting up in him, and he set himself to solve them wherever he might be, whatever doing. Naturally, he was a source of great amusement to every boy in the Glen, as well as of wonder. They joked him in Enochdhu, but, in the great world beyond, they were proud of him, and spoke oft the glories of our Symbolist.

“ Find the velocity wi' which this ba' hits

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Fergusson's heid, Angus," would Gordon of Tomnamoan cry.

"An' the distance it hed stotted back hed it hit me," would Fergusson answer, ducking the ball.

"First," would the Mathematician answer, "ye maun gi'e me the 'resistance' o' yer heid, Ferg. Noo the 'resistance' o' wood is——"

But he never finished, for Fergusson had shied the ball, and struck him on the brow, shouting—

"The same as that, Angus!" amid the loud laughter of the Glen.

As a rule, however, the boys were very tolerant of him, and found much pleasure in his strangeness. Now and again, as the mood took them, they would even try to puzzle him with questions. Then was the Mathematician glorified in Enochdhu.

One bright day they went fishing. In the Pass the Mathematician suddenly stopped at a fir tree. The boys waited and smiled.

"Oot wi't."

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"Gin soon traivels alang fir the wy o' the fibres, at the rate o' 15,000 feet a second, whit maun be the length o' a fir rod that, when vibratin' longitudinally in its fundamental mode, it may gie a note o' 750 vibrations a second?"

The boys held their breath while he counted. In a minute the answer came :

"Ten feet, as sure as I'm a leevin' soul!"

That triumph led Gordon of Tomnamoan when he came to the river to put a poser. He noticed, as he went to seek a trout near the Garry brig, that the inverted image of the concavity of the arch received his shadow exactly as a real inverted arch would do if it were in the place where the image appeared to be.

"Explain it, Angus, an'll gi'e ye a' the trout I catch the day."

"Oh, that's an easy yin. It's this. The sun's image throws a shadow o' your image on the arch itsel', owin' tae yir body stoppin' the rays on their wy tae the water.

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It's ower easy, Gor. Ye made a bargain, but I'll gi'e ye hauf back."

Soon the boys came to a place where the trout were known to lie. They waded into the water and commenced to guddle. They went silently to work, but raced to see who would catch a dozen first.

It was bonnie to watch them lift the stones, and seize the silver trout, and toss them to the bank. The enthusiasm overmastered the Mathematician, and he waded in. But just as he was tickling his first, Ferguson shouted,

"A dizzen! An' bonnie yins tae!"

And the silver beauty darted from Angus' hand.

Then his spirit possessed him. The world of trout and merriment passed and his heaven of figures drew nigh. Fergusson, scorning him for losing his trout, watched him with a smile.

"Whit noo, Angus?"

"The lowest an' highest notes of the human voice ha'e aboot 80 an' 800 vibra-

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tions each a second. Problem—find the wave-lengths in water in which the velocity o' soond is 4,900 feet a second!"

And there, standing in the water, with the silver trout playing about his feet, the Mathematician worked it out.

"Answer— $61\frac{1}{4}$ feet for the lowest note, an' $6\frac{1}{8}$ feet for the highest. That, an' nae mair!"

And then went on guddlin' as if nothing whatever had happened.

"He's a winner," said Fergusson, as he bent to the work again.

"Twa dizzen," he cried, shortly.

And by that time the Mathematician had caught one, and was on the hunt after a problem that must have slipped him like his first trout, for it never came to the consciousness of the Glen, and never straightened his own back.

On the way home they rested by a deep, smooth pool near the Soldier's Leap. In this pool there was said to be a trout so fat that it could not get out. No boy had ever

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seen it, but every one was sure of it, and each had a tale to tell.

"I fished it wi' a line yae day," said Gordon "but juist as I wes pooin' it oot, the line snapped, an' it ran awa. It wes as big as—as—as—ma airm!"

"I saw it a month syne," said Fergusson. "It wes rushin' efter anither ane that hed got into the pool. An' it made a' the water foam. It loupit oot efter the wee yin, an' I had time tae measure it. As sure as daith, it wes as big as—as—as—oor Jock!"

Jock was four feet four inches tall.

"I saw it yesterday," said Buchanan o' Crankie. "It wes staunin' on its tail an' catchin' midges! An' it wes as big as—as—as—a whale!"

Whereat Gordon and Fergusson were very angry, and called him "a leear," and asserted the truth of their own stories. And it was this righteous indignation against Buchanan, "a leear," that was the cause of what followed.

The Mathematician, simple-like, was

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bending over the pool, if haply he might catch a sight of the wonder, when his spirit possessed him. He took a tiny lens from his pocket and held it over the pool.

"Whit's he up tae, noo?" asked Gordon.

"A dinna ken, an' a dinna care," growled Buchanan.

"Somethin' by ordinar," answered Fergusson, catching sight of the lens, afire with the sun.

"The rays o' a vertical sun," said the Mathematician, "are brocht tae a focus by a lens at a distance o' yae fit frae the lens. Gin I haud the lens juist abune the pool, at whit depth in the water will the rays come tae a focus?"

"Gang in an' see," growled Buchanan, giving a push and sending him headlong into the pool. He was angry at being called "a leear."

"An' you gang in an' prove it," shouted Fergusson, infuriated, sending him sprawling into the water.

"That'll teach ye tae be a leear," said

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Gordon solemnly, as Buchanan rose to the top, panting and blowing, "The ways o' transgressors are hard!"

"Saxteen inches," answered the Mathematician, crawling on to the bank. "Saxteen inches, no a nippie mair!"

"Come awa, Angus. It's no guid for ye tae be in the company o' a leear!"

And they dragged him up the bank.

At the top they turned and watched Buchanan climbing out of the pool.

"Tak' care, Buchanan," cried Gordon, anxiously. "It thinks ye're a midge, man. It's stannin' on it's tail! Look!"

"Oh, tak' care, Buchanan," mocked Ferguson. "It's as big as—as—as a whale, man, an' it'll swallow ye! Oh, for yer mither's sake, tak' care!"

And, so mocking, these two righteous heroes burst into loudest laughter, and took to their heels, and scampered home, leaving Buchanan to follow as best he could.

The fate of the Mathematician's life lay in the eyes of Jeannie MacLintock of Auld-

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clune. She was a little lithe-limbed lass, with wild black eyes that shone with super-abounding life. She was the leader of the schule in every frolic, leader of all the boys and girls, wilder than the wildest boy in Enochdhu. She could guddle trout, climb trees, run a race with the best of them. Her great delight was to mount her father's untamed colts, and ride them, bare-backed, till they dropped. The law of opposites was surely at work when it brought these two together. And Fate was very hard.

She was his father's master's daughter, and frisked to schule, leaving the Mathematician to follow carrying her bag. That came to pass this way. One day, on the road to schule, the spirit descended on Angus. He was long time silent, then was given speech.

"Gin I cairried your bag an' mine, Jean, weighing say twal pounds, frae here tae the schule-hoose, say yae mile, whit amount o' 'work' wad I dae?"

"Better try, Angus!" Jean answered, handing him her bag.

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And from that day the Mathematician carried her bag always.

At first he thought it was rather hard of her, but came to like it by and by. He did not yet know that it was love that made him. Soon enough for that! Soon enough for that!

Though content to make him her burden-bearer, the lithe-limbed Jean playfully smiled on the big-boned Mathematician till one day she led the schule bird-nesting up the Crag. There was a swallow's nest high up, and no one in the Glen had a swallow's egg, and Jeannie Maclintock cried she must have one. She tried to climb the Crag herself, but was beaten and angered. She urged every boy around, but to no purpose.

"It's owre high," they answered, one and all.

Meantime the Mathematician was far in the rear, shouting towards the Crag, listening all alert, and noting something. She spied him and ran back.

"The velocity o' soond," he was saying to

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a wee wean, when she reached him, "is 1100 feet a second, Noo, the echo frae the Crag comes back tae me in yin an' a hauf seconds. Problem—whit is the distance o' the Crag frae where we're stannin'?"

"Angus, I want ye," broke in Jean.

"Whit for, Jean?"

"Tae get me a swallow's egg."

"Where is't, Jean?"

"There, Angus, up there. An' no yin o' them'll get it for me."

"It's owre high," they answered, in dudgeon.

But the Mathematician did not hear them.

Slowly he began to climb the crag, clinging with hands and feet to the jutting rocks. Twice his footing gave way, and he was nearly hurled to the ground. But he recovered, and mounted higher and higher, very slowly and with increasing pain. Breathless, the boys looked up at him, with fear on their faces. And Jean's heart beat wildly. A third time the Mathematician

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missed his footing, and a bit of the Crag came dashing down to their feet.

"He'll get killed," whispered Gordon.

"An' it'll be your blame, Jean," added Fergusson.

But, up and up went the Mathematician, till at last he came to the nest.

"825," he cried.

"Hoo mony?" asked Gordon.

"825," he answered.

"Gang awa wi' ye, Angus. Speak the truth, man!"

"825 feet, as sure as daith!"

"Feet? Wha's speakin' aboot feet? Hoo mony eggs are there?"

"Three."

"That's liker't. Noo, come doon."

The Mathematician put the eggs in his bonnet and began to descend. But he found this harder far than climbing. Jean, who had not spoken a word, watched him with great excitement.

"Tak' care, Angus," she cried, as he came

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to where his footing gave way the second time on mounting.

A moment later she screamed and bounded forward. The Mathematician had fallen.

As fortune would have it he fell on a bramble-bush some twenty feet below, and six from the ground. And as Jean bounded forward she caught him as he tumbled from the bush to the ground.

“Are ye hurt, Angus?”

“No muckle, Jean,” he answered, wiping the blood from his bramble-scratched face.

And he looked up into her eyes. They were gentle as his mother's and filled with tears.

Then the Mathematician knew that he loved her.

“Here's yir eggs, Jean. They're a wee bit broken, but ye can blaw them oot . . . 825 feet. That's hoo faur we were frae the Crag when we heard the echo. As sure as I'm a leevin' soul!”

“Nae mair eggs for me, Angus,” answered Jean.

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And she took him by the hand and led him away.

Never was a hand so tender, thought he. To his dying day the Mathematician lived on that loving touch.

The crisis came about a year later. Rab MacIntock found Auldclune too hard to till, and too small for sheep, and, like many another in the Glen since, and thousands throughout his native land, he determined to emigrate. At first, the joy of travel and adventure, far afield, possessed Jean, and carried her many days. Then, as the time drew near when she must leave "home," a sense of weariness and loneliness overcame her. And in her weariness she turned to the Mathematician. And all the sentimental that was in her woke.

The night before she went away they met by the Garry and wandered through the Pass together. Her heart was very tender, and, like the child she was, she let it speak. She leant on a stile and wept, and he dried her tears.

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"Here, Angus, let me peen it on yir breast—a sprig o' ivy—and a wee blue floo'er, "I-cling-to-thee," "Forget-me-not!"

And she held up her face to be kissed.

And the Mathematician kissed her.

It was his first kiss—and his last.

She was twelve years of age and he thirteen. What wonder that when she went away she forgot? She was only a child. Her new strange life engulfed her. The old passed like a childish dream. The new grew up, and wiped it out. She forgot! She forgot! And the Mathematician in course of time became a blurred memory.

But with him it was different. That meeting and parting were real forever. That kiss lingered on his lips. That tender look stirred his heart, and would not pass away.

The boy grew to a man, big-boned, long, and lanky, and his love for Jean Maclintock outpaced his years. He looked for the letter that never came. Still his heart was true. Robbed of all ambition, he stayed on in Enochdhu, and, in time, became Postman

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and Mathematical tutor to the Glen. Still the letter never came to him, though many a love-song he carried to others. Only one bit of news, indeed, ever reached the Glen of her. Rab sent Gordon a Canadian paper with a note of her marriage. No one knew of the Mathematician's lasting love for her, and so he never was told even this. Nor did he hear till, thirty years later, her son came to Enochdhu, and told that Jean was dead.

In the Glen, too, he was counted heartless, loveless, a passionless sage, wedded to symbols, affianced to figures. They twitted him about women, and put him mathematical queries as to the number of wedless maidens in the world, and the simple fraction that might easily be resolved by him.

But he answered them not a word.

He went on with his work, loving her in secret with a great and deathless love—till near the end. Then it all came out, and he was honoured by every heart in Enochdhu.

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One day he was on his round and came to the ruins of Auldclune. The grass grew on the broken thatch and on the "chuckies" (smooth stones) round the door. The windows had fallen out. The door lay across the entry. The north gable had lain on the ground for many winters. The garden was overgrown with bracken, and only one old gooseberry tree stood to mark the spot. It was a desolate, dreary ruin, to be seen, to-day, repeated a thousand times, all over braid Scotland. But to the Mathematician it was the bonniest place in all the Glen.

Coming from the ruin, Gordon of Tomnamoan met him full in the face.

"A letter for ye," he said, and hurried on.

But Gordon had time to see the look in his eyes.

"He's a queer yin, Angus. There's nae accountin' for the wy feegures thraw him. But that's no the look o' symbols. . . Problem—find o' what!"

And Gordon looked after him, much puzzled.

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"Sall!" he shouted, an hour later, starting his collie out of its wits, "Sall! I've got it! Love—that's the answer. 'An' Jeannie Maclintock's the lass. Dae ye no mind hoo he cairried her bag tae schule . . an' speilt the Crag for her? . . An' the ivy that's a' owre his hoose is it no the same as covers Auldclune, an' found in nae ither place in a' the Glen? . . Sall, but we were a puir lot no tae hae fun' that oot afore noo!"

And from that day the Mathematician was glorified in the Glen.

Angus Smith went home that night and took a withered flower from his Book. It was the flower Jean pinned on his breast that summer eve long ago. He felt the thrill of her kiss still, and saw the tears in her eyes! And he bent and kissed the flower softly. It was broken and withered and brown, but its message was fresh in his heart.

And there in his book the flower lay till he died, and lies unto this day—a memorial

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of the greatness of his love. I have it in my desk now, and, when my heart is faithless or weary, I take it out, and have a long, long look.

IV.

A SUMMER BEAUTY.

WHEN Faskally was let for the summer months to a great English beauty, there was much excitement in the Glen. Fergusson, who had arranged matters during a visit to London, came back with tales of a glory that dazzled the eyes of Enochdhu. At no time a communicative man, or extravagant in speech, he could not restrain himself on this occasion, and entertained the Glen for more than nine days with accounts of the Beauty. The tale was not all told at once, but with the leisure and reserve that ever characterise a man with the world at his feet. Bit by bit our eager minds took it in, and enjoyed the interval between the courses as much as the savoury dishes themselves. And no man

A Summer Beauty.

enjoyed it more than Fergusson, who reckoned himself a fine judge of women and the points of beauty.

She lived in a mansion in Portman Square, and the charm of her manner was simply bewitching. Her features, delicately formed and chiselled with exquisite touch, outrivalled the rarest creations of Grecian sculpture, and were lit with a smile that was more than entrancing. But her eyes excelled everything. "Blue," said the factor, breaking into poetry, "blue as the highest sky in summer weather." The light that danced in them, and the bounding life that overran them, were fascinating beyond words. "Tall" and "stately," "handsome" and "gracious," Fergusson was completely at a loss to find epithets adequately describing the charms of the Beauty. She was coming to take possession of Faskally early in June, and we should then see if he had exaggerated.

Before she appeared every man in Enochdhu was under her spell.

A Summer Beauty.

She came—a Beauty surpassing the dreams of the Glen. It was a bright sunny day, and she was clad in purest white that dazzled the vision. Her great, golden locks, light blue eyes, charming manners, stately bearing, and entrancing smile won the Glen at first sight, and gave Fergusson an enviable reputation for accurate reporting. Her procession to Faskally was triumphal. But it was noted that the Beauty's brightness was in strange contrast with the grave face of her coachman as he drove her along.

It was not only the common folk of Enochdhu that were excited over the Beauty, but the great folks at the Castle also. The day after her arrival, the Duke and Duchess called and welcomed her to the Glen. Later in the day the young Marquis presented his compliments. The Beauty received him with exquisite grace of manner, smiling wondrously, and evidently giving rein to her powers of fascination. As he rode away the Marquis found himself indebted to Pope to express his feelings:—

A Summer Beauty.

“What winning graces ! What majestic mien !
She moves a goddess, and she looks a queen.”

That night he attempted to write a sonnet, a crime he had never committed before. It was about a pair of eyes “blue as the highest sky in summer weather,” golden locks “whose winning were a fortune,” and a smile compared with which “the sun-kissed rippling sea ” might not once be mentioned.

From that day communication between Faskally and the Castle was uninterrupted. The bright carriage of the Beauty drove her often to and fro, dressed ever with consummate taste, and brimming over with life. Her gaiety was not vain, but comely as a child's, with no strain, no attempt to hide with laughter a heart of pain. To the eye of man there was no happier or fairer woman under the sun. The young Marquis evidently thought so with all his heart, and the Duke and Duchess were not against his thinking it. Gaiety followed gaiety in quick succession at the Castle and Faskally, and the Beauty was the life of all.

A Summer Beauty.

Thus the summer passed. Bright June glided pleasantly by, and July outshone the glory of her younger sister. August came bounding in with happy face. The Beauty laughed in the summer sun, and the light in her eyes grew brighter. The Marquis bathed in the glory of her life. All the Glen saw how things were going, and smiled pleasedly. That the Beauty's heart was won we did not doubt, while her manner of lavishing her charms on the coming Duke gave us great contentment.

We waited confidently, anticipating events. Excitement ran high, and reached its happy consummation, when, early in August, the engagement of the Marquis and the Beauty was announced. The wedding-day was fixed for the fourteenth of September, at the Beauty's own request, we heard, in order that the marriage might take place before the Marquis was likely to be recalled to join his regiment. The Duke and Duchess were delighted, while every man in Enochdhu and the country-side rejoiced openly—*all*

A Summer Beauty.

save one, the grave coachman of the Beauty herself.

I noticed his black looks that bright June day when he drove her in all her white to Faskally, and from the first, I took interest in him. Some little kindness propitiated him specially towards me, and marked me out for the strange story he had to tell.

On the "Twelfth," there was a great shooting party at the Castle, and it was then he told me. The ladies accompanied the party to the mountain-side, and were to lunch with us at noon. The coachman came with his Beauty, and I marked that while she was specially fascinating that day, restless with life and laughter, he was particularly grave and anxious-looking.

Meeting with an accident to my gun, I returned early to the luncheon spot, and found him moodily sitting apart from the other servants, keeping the Beauty closely in sight. I approached him and entered into conversation.

"Well, Butler, what's up?"

A Summer Beauty.

“Troubled, sir, and wondering how to tell it.”

“What about?”

“The Beauty, sir, as will soon be no Beauty.”

“What do you mean? What’s wrong?”

“That’s wrong, sir, which the cleverest men in London have not been able to put right. It’s very sad, sir, for the Marquis as well as for the Beauty, too sad for me to bear.”

“For the Marquis? How?”

“Promise me you will try to save him, sir, and I will tell you.”

“Go on.”

“My fascinating mistress is not always so. For seven months in the year she is the saddest woman in England, kept in a private place and watched night and day to keep her from self-destruction. With the dawn of spring sanity returns to her, and in the summer she is what you see. But in the summer only. With the dying of summer will come the dying of her bright, summer

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life, and, in its place, a long winter of great gloom will come upon her. In less than six weeks the Beauty will be raving mad."

The tale fell on me like a thunderbolt, and for a time I knew not what to think. It was hard to believe the coachman spoke the truth, when I turned and looked at her, laughing in her summer pride. I questioned him till there was no doubt left. With tears in his eyes, and in a tone that was too sad to be feigned, he besought me to believe him ere it should be too late.

"The Beauty is infatuated," he exclaimed, "and is bent on bringing off the marriage. Save her from herself, sir, and save the Marquis from an awful doom!"

How to tell the Marquis I knew not. That he, in turn, was infatuated of the Beauty I could see, and that he would not listen to a whisper raised against her. A few nights after "The Twelfth," I loitered on the road between Faskally and the Castle, determined to speak. But when I saw him wander through the Pass in the broad moon-

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light, with the Beauty leaning lovingly on his arm, my scheme was shaken. And when he returned, alone, an hour later, singing a long love-ditty, I had not the heart to stop him. Several times after this I tried to begin, but, often as I attempted the task, the words stuck in my throat. He noticed my strange behaviour, and when he saw me more frequently than formerly in the company of the Beauty, he began to be suspicious of me. I was studying her for myself, but, the Marquis grew jealous, and became strange to me in turn. So my difficulties increased. No trace of mania could I discover in the Beauty but increasing brilliance and more abounding life. The story seemed incredible. And so I procrastinated. At least let the Marquis enjoy himself while he may, I said, for soon enough the iron will enter into his soul. So day after day passed till the fourteenth of September was only ten days off. Then I mustered up courage to speak.

A Summer Beauty.

It was just as I expected, For a moment he was speechless with incredulity and indignation. Then the torrent of his wrath broke loose on me.

“What do you mean by playing a joke like this on me? To play the fool with love is cruel! It is a lie, a foul and base slander, an idle tale told by some lying servant. Could any man in his sane senses look at her and take it in? Go, and let me hear no more of it; lift your hand from my heart, and, with silence, heal the wound. Else our friendship will be broken, and the Castle gates will shut behind your back forever!”

At any other time I should have answered him according to his folly, and have turned my back on the gates with proud scorn. But the life-long happiness of the Marquis depended on me, and I was content to bear the sting now, if only I could save him. To confirm it all I went to the coachman again, and questioned him anew. With tears in his eyes he wished it were a lie. But already he could see signs of the mania re-

A Summer Beauty.

turning ; and no one could tell at what hour it would come upon her, and swiftly change the summer smile into winter's impenetrable gloom.

The day before the wedding I made another attempt to save him. I met him returning from Faskally, after having seen his sweetheart Beauty for the last time. To-morrow he would meet her in the kirk as bride, and leave it with her, his wife ! He sang happily as he walked homewards, and dreamt his beautiful dream.

At the gates I stopped him and pleaded with him to save himself ere it would be too late.

“ Fool ! Madman ! Liar ! ” he answered.

Then, without further sign, he marched towards the gates, and shut them, leaving me without.

So he went to his doom.

The fourteenth of September dawned bright and sunny. The wedding bells rang merrily from early morn. The whole Glen was festive and full of joy.

A Summer Beauty.

The Marquis was envied and congratulated by all the countryside.

At noon the ducal party arrived at the kirk. The building was crowded by all the gentry of the district, while the joyously expectant tenantry thronged without. The ceremony was fixed for 12.15. All eyes were turned along the Faskally road. The time came, and no sight of the Beauty's carriage. Minute by minute went by, and 12.45 came. Still no news from Faskally. What could have happened?

Catching my eye the Marquis turned white with dread.

Beckoning to me, he left the kirk, and sprang into the ducal coach, I following.

"Faskally! Quick!" he gasped to the driver. He was shaking like a leaf.

Not a word to me; only a look that told of infinite pain.

At breakneck pace we drove to Faskally, wondering and fearing. Could the worst have happened?

A Summer Beauty.

At the door of the mansion we found her carriage waiting, with horses gaily caparisoned, and decked for the wedding. And in the hall was the Beauty herself, in full bridal attire, white and dazzling, but with a wild glare in her bright blue eyes, and loud maniacal laughter breaking from her foaming lips.

The winter had come while yet the summer sun beat on her bridal dress.

OF AN ATHEIST

I.
THROUGH GREAT TRIBULATION.

THERE was only one atheist in the Glen, and he had all our sympathies. To look on the grandeur of the scenery round Enochdhu was, for each of us, to behold the beauty of the Lord. Great bens on every hand, with peaks reaching to the throne of God, awed my spirit ever, and made me walk as in the presence of the Wonderful. To watch the mist lift from the mountains, or the sunlight play on the heather, or the wind sweep the forests of firs that covered the lower reaches, seemed to me enough to convince anyone of the being of God. More so to watch the hand of Spring come stealing up the Glen, and paint the trees with myriad greens, and strew the woods with flowers ; or the hand

Through Great Tribulation.

of Autumn that casts its wealth of purple and crimson and gold over mountain and strath. In the midst of the glory I saw the Lord and was glad.

But it was otherwise with Sandy Graham, who saw in Nature nothing but the caprice of chance, and in the seasons nothing but the roll of the sun. He was a fine man, of much intellectual calibre, rigidly honest and upright, open-minded and kindly-hearted. In build he was big and massive, with frank face and broad brow, and with eyes that looked wistful and sad at times, as if they longed to find something beyond their present vision. I knew him from childhood, and was always drawn to him. In early years he read much, devoured every thoughtful book he could find, revelled in philosophy, dipped into science and was regarded as one who would shine in life. His fine speech and brilliant wit were the admiration of the Glen. Contrary to expectation, he did not leave the clachan to win us honour in the great world, but stayed on, and settled in

Through Great Tribulation.

Craigendarroch, where the Grahams had tilled the land for hundreds of years. For his wife he chose Mary MacLaren, on whose face an angel seemed to dwell ever-smiling. It was a heartsome sight to watch Sandy lead her into his pew on the Sabbath morning and kneel beside her, the love-light covering both their faces. It always made me lift my eyes to God, and, for a prayer, give Him a smile.

It was not long after his marriage that the clouds of doubt swept over Sandy's mind. He was greatly troubled to see the faith of his life totter and fall, as were those of us who saw the great eclipse ; but none more than Mary. The shadow of the clouds fell on her, and hid the angel. In his trouble he consulted Dr. Nairn, the learned Edinburgh divine, afterwards the occupant of a professorial chair, who was spending the summer in the Glen. The learned man sent him away empty, saying that such difficulties were only for biblical experts and trained intellects, and not for the rural mind to

Through Great Tribulation.

attempt. Had Sandy gone to his own minister, who knew the rural mind far better than the learned townsman, it might have been otherwise. From that day, however, there was no rift in the cloud that hung over his soul.

For some years he drifted further and further away from the church. From religion he turned to philosophy, passed from Fichte's idealism to Schelling's absolute existence, soared into Hegel's cloud-land of mysticism, and alighted, with Auguste Comte, on the religion of humanity. But so far he had not become an atheist. It is seldom thinking that drives men to that, but lack of thought and woe of heart. Sandy weathered many an intellectual storm, but sank in the waters of sorrow.

It happened thus. Three years after he married, two children were given to him, who grew to be his pride. The golden curls of little Colin, that hung over his shoulders and round his winsome face, brought sunshine to his father's life. The black silken tresses

Through Great Tribulation.

that grew on wee Janet's quick, impulsive head were no less his joy. His whole life was wrapped round the life of his children. Mary's heart leapt for joy ; the angel on her face re-appeared, and smiled as in the days gone by.

Five years of bliss rolled on, and then came the sorrow, when merry little Colin, the joy of Craigendarroch, went down with diphtheria. The grief of the father was breaking to behold. In his distress he lifted up his hands to heaven and cried :—

“ If there be a God, come, I pray Thee, and save my little Colin ! ”

Little Janet, who had followed him into the room, and knelt beside him, caught the accent of the prayer, and likewise cried :—

“ If there be a God, come, I pray Thee, and save my little brother ! ”

For a time the child lingered, then took wings and flew away. The wee doctor left before the end, that he might not look on the sorrow of Sandy. He was stricken dumb and tearless. He went about as if stunned,

Through Great Tribulation.

unconscious of the presence of mourners. His eyes often wandered heavenward, with long, questioning gaze, but he spoke not a word till little Colin was being lowered in the grave. Then his heart broke, and he cried with an exceeding bitter cry :—

“There is no God! There is no God! Else He had spared my Colin Graham!”

So crying, he seized little Janet by the hand, and hurried from the grave.

From that day Sandy Graham forsook all semblance of religion, and became recognised in the Glen as an atheist. The name of God he never mentioned. Not even when, a year later, sorrow slew the angel on Mary's face, and laid her beside his Colin Graham. Speechless and sullen he walked amid the shades of death, with only little Janet and her jet tresses left him to sun his dark life, till the Dayspring should arise and shine.

When the young minister came to Enochdhu, Sandy's sorrow was twenty years old, and Janet one of the winsomest lassies in the

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Glen. A strong attachment grew between him and Sandy, that worked for good. It was noticed on all hands that the sad heart was opening to the touch of a new-found joy. Janet, for the first time, began to come to the kirk, and, returning, used to repeat the evangel, or tell to her father one of the minister's works of love.

Then a faint smile would spread over the face of our atheist and a wistful longing enter his soul. Then the vision of his simple faith would come back to him and cast its broken light on his life. And once Janet found him pouring over the open Book, with tears in his eyes.

For a time it looked as if the daughter were about to enter the fold and lead the father back with her. But it did not come as we expected. Through tribulation he had wandered from it, and through that gate again he was destined to return. In the world there was nothing left him now but Janet, and hence, the darts of sorrow could only reach him after piercing her. So much

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was his life twined round her that, when Alan Gordon came courting Janet, he frowned, and drove him away, in fear of losing her. Yet Alan was a clever lad, of noble bearing and generous heart, of whom the Glen was proud.

With a liking for literature, Alan went to London, promising to return next summer, and fondly hoping, as he bade Janet a sweet good-bye, that he would then be able to claim her for his bride. Ah me! that so many hopes, all radiant and many-tinted, are broken in the great metropolis, and send a scourge of pain to distant glens, and to countless hearts far removed from London's bitter cry!

Glad to have her to himself again, Sandy did not at first notice any change come over Janet. Only slowly did it dawn on him that the bright life was darkening. He came upon her one day with a letter from London in her hand, weeping and dreaming. She tried to hide her grief from him, and

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would not tell her sorrow ; but his heart divined it all.

Thus they walked together six sad months, till, one morning, Sandy woke to find her gone. No one knew whither. No one had seen her. No trace could be found. Many tales were told, many theories invented, many suspicions aroused, while in one quarter the foul tongue of slander hoarsely whispered. A letter sent to London came back, marked "Gone—no address." Alan's father had heard from him only a week before, and could not dream what had happened. The mystery only deepened.

Sandy's life was utterly crushed and stricken with despair. Weeks passed without word or sign, and ere a month had gone, his head and flowing beard were white as snow. Then the fountains of his heart broke, and he wept bitterly. Alone, all alone, in a hopeless world, his sorrow drove him to God again. Lifting up his voice, he cried :—

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“O God, if there be a God, bring me back my child, my only child, and I will honour Thee!”

The young minister, who was with Sandy through all his trouble, and knelt beside him when he cried, afterwards confessed to me that it nearly broke his faith, and made him pray he might never hear the like again.

When more than a month had gone, the Mathematician brought a letter to Sandy in Janet's handwriting. He handed it to the father and sat down to hear the news. Trembling, Sandy broke the seal and read:—

“Charing Cross Hospital,
“London, May 26, 18—.

“DEAR FATHER,

“I feared for a long while there was something wrang, and syne his letters got sae short, I was sure of it. Sae I cam' awa tae seek and help him. I didna tell ye, father, for I thocht ye widna let me gang. But when I got here I couldna find him. He had left his auld address, and naebody

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kent where he was. I searched for him everywhere for three weeks, and couldna catch a sicht of him. Then, ae day, as I was despairin', I got knocked doon near Charing Cross (for the streets are awfu' crooded here), and was carried to this place gey dazed like. When I cam' tae, they speired at me where I wanted tae gang. The nurse was rale kind tae me, and sae I tell't her a' my trouble. She listened nicely and speired his name. 'Alan Gordon,' I said, kind o' blushing. 'Wait a wee,' she said, and wi' that she hurried aff tae anither ward. She cam' back smilin' in a whilie. 'What'll ye gi'e me gin I find yir lad?' said she. 'The thanks o' a Scotch lassie,' says I. 'Weel, he's in the next ward,' (she smiled) 'and, if ye're guid, I'll tak' ye tae see him the morn. He's been rale bad, but he'll be able to gang about sune.' Ye can imagine hoo I felt, father, and, after promisin', I couldna thank her for greetin wi' joy. Next day she took me. Eh me! but he was changed! . . . They think we will be able to leave next week, and I want tae bring him hame. But I hae nae siller, and I hope ye'll send me some. And ye micht pit in a primrose frae

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the Glen, for I'm wearyin' sair tae see ocht o't. I'll be gled tae get hame, father, and I'm sorry for rinnin' awa' withoot tellin' ye, but I couldna bide the thocht o' Alan being in trouble, and me no there tae help him.

Your loving daughter,

JANET GRAHAM.

The old man grat for joy, and the Mathematician, to save himself the shame of tears, snatched his cap hurriedly, and, with a gulp, hastened from the scene.

II.

OUT OF THEIR DISTRESSES.

WHEN the Mathematician beat his hasty retreat, Sandy Graham covered his face with his hands and entered the Eternal Presence. There he lay, as a child that has been lost lies in its mother's bosom, weeping for joy, and resting, sweetly resting, in the love and strength of the Almighty Arms. And the angels of God sang a sweet lullaby that fell on his fevered spirit like the touch of an infinite calm. No word escaped him, no prayer, only sobs and tears ; but the Father saw the broken heart, and the smile that rose to thank Him, and He rejoiced in the presence of the angels.

Throughout the day, though Sandy had not kissed Janet since she was a child, he

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kept pressing her letter to his lips again and again, and covered the signature, "Janet Graham," with kisses and caresses more numerous than the most love-sick swain would have showered on his sweetheart's sweetest. He carried it next his heart, and slept with it under his pillow that and the following night. It seemed to him to link his spirit with hers, and fan the flame of a new joy.

Her room, that had not been entered since her flight, now drew him irresistibly. Everything was there just as she had left it. Her bed, that had been half-slept in, was still unmade. With his own hands he took up the counterpane, blankets, sheets and pillows, and made it ready for her. He lifted them as gently as if he were lifting a wounded lamb, and he laid them down without a crease, patting and smoothing each with love in every touch.

On the mantel-board was a yellow flower-vase with forget-me-nots in it. Some had already withered, while others that had been

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buds were breaking into flower, the stem having taken root. But all the water was gone. Under the vase was a note he had not seen till now. Seizing it he read, in Janet's handwriting, the paper stained as if with tears—

“Dinna trouble aboot me, father, for I'll sune be hame. I hear him cryin' sair the nicht and maun gang tae help him.”

There was no signature, but he kissed the note as if it had been covered with her name, and laid it, with the other, next his heart.

On the mantel-board, also, was a wooden money-bank that had belonged to little Colin. The old man lifted it and opened it with awe. Inside was a sixpence he had given the child on his fifth birthday, a curl of his golden hair carefully wrapped in tissue paper, and a silver brooch that his Mary had made from a buckle of the child's shoe, and wore on her breast, he remembered, till sorrow laid her next the crown of gold.

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With a tender heart he laid it down and turned away.

He came to the window, where, on the sill, was a bit of an old tree-stump overgrown with moss intertwined with ivy, and beside it a primrose root with one pale flower blooming on it. He remembered that last autumn Janet and Alan had brought them home, Alan, who had dug them for her, carrying them gently in his arm ; and he bent to kiss the pale yellow bloom. They were needing water and he gave them plenty, after touching them with his fingers and putting a kiss among the ivy, because they were Janet's, and her love was now sanctified by sorrow. Coming to water the forget-me-nots, his eye caught a picture he had never seen before. It was only a cheap copy of Millet's *L'Angelus* that Alan had sent to Janet on her last birthday, but Sandy stood entranced before it. The vision entered his soul, and carried him away. Insensibly he bowed his head and worshipped with the rustic pair. The sun was sinking behind

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Schiehallion in great glory, and the sound of church bells came floating up the Glen.

The young minister called next day, and found Sandy busy packing a travelling bag.

“‘Siller’? I’ll gang masel, sir!”

So, on the third day, he set out for the great metropolis, smiling as he went. I saw him at the station, and shall never forget the look of joy with which he was transfigured. It was the old Sandy born again, the Sandy Graham that led Mary MacLaren to his pew, twenty-five years ago, with the bonnie love-light covering both their faces.

“It’s a lang road tae traivel,” he remarked to me afterwards, “and a body wad need tae hae something on his mind, or it ’ad be unco wearisome. It wes gettin’ dark when we came tae Lunnon, and ye couldna see the place for smoke. But ye could smell it miles awa. It sort o’ turned me again it; and made me wonner hoo folk could thole it. I could easy unerstan’ hoo Alan’s health had gien way, and hoo Janet wes cryin’ even for ae floo’er frae Enochdhu.”

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What to do when he arrived had scarcely crossed his mind. To find Janet and bring her and Alan back to the Glen was all his thought. Where Charing Cross was, and where to lodge till the morning he did not know. The bustle of the great terminus bewildered him. It was not long, however, before a porter noticed him and came to the rescue.

"Can I do anything for you, sir?" he asked in the soft Southron tongue.

"I dinna ken, ma man, for whit tae dae, noo I'm here, is past jalousin."

"Oh, you're Scotch, sir. I'll tell the guard and he will put you right, sir. He's Scotch, and always glad to meet a fellow-countryman."

The guard, a tall, handsome, obliging man, by name Glendinning, hailing from Kirkcudbright, came in a few minutes, smiling pleasantly.

"I noticed ye on the journey, sir, and gin ye wad come hame wi' me ye'll be rael welcome. I'm only in lodgings here, but the

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guid wumman will be gled tae see ye, and I'm aften lonesome. Ye can mak' yersel at hame, sir, and coont me a freend while ye're here. We're a' John Tamson's bairns."

Before Sandy could say "Thanks," the guard lifted his bag and led him away—by no means the first whom porters and guards, kindest and most attentive of servants ever, had helped that day.

Ten minutes walk brought them to Glendinning's rooms in Portland Road, where the good woman of the house had already supper spread. That done, they gathered round the hearth filled with heather, at the sight of which Sandy was moved to tell his kindly host his errand.

"It's pleased I am tae meet ye, Mr. Graham," the guard answered heartily. "Jeannie Rankin, the nurse, tell't us aboot it last Sabbath, an' ye had a' oor sympathies. Dr. Donald had ye in his prayer, and was rael touchin.' Ye maun bide here till your dochter an' her lad's better, an' traivel back wi' me again. I ken her brawly, an' mind

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her journey fine. But it's little I thocht, as I saw her sittin' greetin' in the train, that she was comin' sic a lang way tae dae sic a bonnie deed."

Early next forenoon Sandy set out for the hospital. Though it was not the hour for visitors, he had little difficulty in gaining admittance, thanks to Jeannie Rankin, whom Glendinning advised him to seek. She brought him to the door of the ward, with a tender sympathy that told him her heart also held a love-story. Within, Janet was sitting by the bedside of Alan, holding his white hand in hers, and looking down on him with great contentment. The old man was nearly broken with the sight.

"Wait a minute, and I'll prepare them for ye, sir," said the nurse, as she entered.

During that minute an angel came down and "troubled the waters." And Sandy "stepped in."

"There's somebody come to see you, Miss Graham."

Janet started from Alan's side.

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“Come in, sir!”

“Father!” cried Janet, as she leaped into his arms.

“Ma ain lassie!” he whispered, as he clasped her to his heart.

The nurse had business at the other end of the ward, and the patients looked that way, too, when they saw the tears flowing down Sandy’s face and on to his snow-white beard. The suffering and sorrowing understand each other well, and are tender and courteous in all their sympathy.

After a little she led him towards Alan. His Scotch mastery of self had returned.

“Weel, Alan, hoo’s a’ the day?”

“Fine, Sandy. . . . It’s guid o’ ye tae come.”

Without answer, he began to open a little box he carried in his hand. As he did so, Janet noticed his snow-white hair. Her heart turned in her breast.

“Here’s the primrose ye asked for, Janet. I poo’d it frae the root in yir room. I’m

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thinkin' ye'll mind whaur it cam' frae," he said with a smile.

Janet took it, blushing happily, while Alan's pulse beat swiftly, and made him feel for one brief moment as if he were romping the Glen again, and digging primroses, as on that fine Spring day of long ago.

"And here's a bit o' ivy frae' the auld stump he got ye near the Falls. Ye'll mind that tae," and Sandy smiled.

So for an hour they talked together, and gladdened their hearts with visions of the Glen.

Every day after that he came, till they were both able to leave. It was more than a week, but time was not painful now. Yet it was with a thankful heart he drove up one morning to take them home. Before leaving he took the nurse by the hand and let his heart speak.

"Ye belang tae a noble profession, lassie, an' come gey near the Heart that couldna' thole, lang syne, tae see a body suffer. I'm thinkin' God 'll no' stint the gold in the

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croon He's makin' for ye. It's bonnie tae see there's mair tender hearts and gentle hands and lovin' een i' the worl' than the worl' kens o'. Tak' an auld man's thanks for a' ye've dune for his lassie, an', gin ye'll come tae oor Glen at ony time, ye'll find folk there that'll aye hae mind o' yer kindness, an' wad be gled tae show ye some in turn."

On the way to Scotland the guard paid them much attention, so that, as Alan said, "Folk would be thinking Janet a princess, and Sandy a king!"

But Enochdhu was not outdone. Never did it look bonnier, and never were three more glad to see it. They drank deeply of the scent of new-mown hay all the way up the Strath, and felt at home before they reached Kinloch. Fergusson of Faskally was at the station with his trap, and "happened to be going their gate, gin they would honour him." He did not say he had been to meet the train every day for a week past! Gordon of Tomnamoan was also there to welcome Alan,

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and drove him off at once. The look on the old man's face as he gazed on his son, pale and broken, was waesome, and lingered with me many days.

At Craigendarroch, Kirsty Robertson, the ministering angel of the Glen, had been busy preparing for them all day. The fire was burning brightly in the kitchen, and a tempting meal laid in the parlour when they arrived. She welcomed them at the door with smiling face, but, when they turned to look for her, a minute later, the angel had taken wing.

I called on them next evening, and found Sandy sitting at the parlour window, with Janet at his feet. He was stroking her black, silken tresses with loving hand. The sun was sinking beyond Schiehallion in glory of crimson and gold. Its pale light fell on their lifted faces and transfigured them. And on the table lay a Bible, tear-stained and worn, open at the 107th Psalm, with these words underlined:—

Out of Their Distresses.

“ They cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses. He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder.”

OF A LITERARY MAN

.

THE CROWN OF GOLD.

THE crown of gold was almost within Alan's grasp when his health broke down. He had struggled to reach it with a clean hand, struggled against many a temptation and snare, and had almost touched it, when the crisis came. Otherwise he had not failed. His first article was accepted by the *Times* (after it had been declined by another great London journal), and was noticed by most of the daily and literary papers with eager curiosity. The same week one of the Reviews published a poem from his pen with much appreciation. But after these early successes came a long and trying lull. Weeks went past without any note of acceptance. By almost every post he sent an article, poem, or tale to

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various papers and magazines, only to have them returned "with the editor's compliments and thanks." No doubt, had he known how to place his work, it would not have happened thus, at any rate for so long. Yet his genius was undoubtedly of a kind that would not at once appeal to the public taste—fanciful, emotional, transcendental, infused with Keltic fire and colour.

At last, however, nearly six months after his *Times* success, came a letter from Fleet Street that set his heart bounding. It was from the editor of a great magazine :—

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I have been greatly charmed and deeply touched by your short story, 'The Rustling of Angels' Wings,' and shall be glad indeed to use it. I propose putting it into the next number of my magazine. If you could do me a set of such stories—twelve perhaps—I should be more than pleased,

"Yours gratefully,

"ALEX. HUTTON."

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By the evening post came another letter from a second editor, thanking him for his passionate poem entitled "The Heather Child," and soliciting further contributions. Next morning came yet another, accepting a historical sketch, written months before, and suggesting that he would do well to work it into a great historical romance.

But these successes came too late. Alan had laboured and starved till his constitution was broken. The good woman of the house where he lodged, tried to coax him with tit-bits from her own table, but his independent spirit refused to eat the bread of charity. Slowly, but surely, she saw him borne down with labour and disappointment, while he insisted on paying her his last shilling. His letters home sought to cover his distress, though Janet's love read between the lines. The day he posted his last letter to her, he was going towards Fleet Street with the sketch to follow "The Rustling of Angels' Wings," when he fell down completely exhausted and fainted away in the

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Strand. He said to me afterwards, that when he fell it seemed as if the air were laden with angels, and he heard nothing but the rustling of wings, till suddenly a mighty wind arose, sweeping them all in fury before it, as he sank into Nirvana. He was carried to Charing Cross Hospital, where he fought with death many weeks till Janet came and found him.

When he reached Enochdhu his fight was not over. In haste to get home he had risen too soon. The long journey had tried him sorely, and induced a serious relapse. The pale face and broken frame Tomnamoan welcomed home with waesome look, seemed to the father's anxious heart soon destined to join his mother in the kirkyard of Enochdhu. His spirit rebelled and cried bitterly, for Alan had been the pride of their heart.

"Ye maun save him," he cried to the wee doctor. "Ye poo'd Ballantine o' Balintoul's laddie frae' the grave, an' ye maun pu' mine. We're a' prood o' ye in the Glen, an' mind hoo ye widna' let M'Naughton's lassie gang when the Edinburgh doctors gied

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her up. Ye maun save him. He maunna dee an' him sae clever ! ”

In his rebellion he had forgotten Enoch-dhu's reserve, and spoken to our doctor as never man in the Glen had done before. But that heart, which carried all our sorrows, understood, and sent a look into the wee doctor's eyes which when Gordon saw, he repented his speech, and broke down utterly.

“ Keep up yir hert, man, an' dinna' gie way like that, or there's nae sayin' what'll happen. It'll be a tough fecht, an' naebody kens hoo it'll end, but ye maun hae faith an' learn tae smile.”

The stricken father bowed his head.

“ I've dune ma best at a' times, an' hae focht mony a sair fecht wi' death, wham I hate as only a doctor can. Sae ye maun be sure I'll stan' ma grun at Tomnamoan, an' fecht hard for the son o' Mary Mackenzie. But I canna' promise ye mair.”

Gordon caught the accent, but vainly tried to speak.

“ I'll be passin' Craigendarroch, an' I'll

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gi'e Janet a cry, for, I'm thinkin' the laddie'll need some gentle nursin', an' there's mair medicine in love than the worl' kens o'. Gie her a smile when she comes, an' Mary'll bless ye."

The doctor probed at the heart of Tomnamoan. At the sound of that name the broken man braced himself together, looked at the doctor as if he understood, turned, and entered the sick-room with a smile.

"It'll be a tough fecht an' a lang ane," said the wee doctor to himself, as he drove away, "but wi' faith an' love on our side we'll mebbe warstle through. "It's no' as if he'd been a prodigal," and his voice thickened. "But, gin he does, hoo the Lunnon doctors 'll open their een!" And, at the thought, he whipped his horse into a gallop, exulting as if already the victory were won.

For a month the life of Alan hung in the balance. Nursed by Janet, and Kirsty Robertson, day and night, and smiled on by his father, for Mary's sake, though his heart

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was nigh fainting, the patient nevertheless slowly sank till he came near the gates of death. Janet never once feared, not even when delirium set in, and the doctor spoke gravely to Kirsty at the door. In Enochdhu she felt he was safe, felt it as if Heaven had revealed it to her; and the peace of God garrisoned her heart.

The Kirkyard was greatly troubled. They were stern, unbending men, of whom one might not expect much kindness, but in sorrow they were gentle as women.

"I'm hearin' the laddie's far through and havers awa' in his sleep. He disna' eat muckle either, an' the drap he drinks is a scannal tae a body born in the Glen," said Fergusson of Faskally.

It could never be proved, but Janet always suspected it was he who left, every market-day, a parcel of grapes and wine at the door of Tomnamoan.

"I'm thinkin' the doctor maun be bate this time," said Ballantine of Balintoul.
"Whit for disna' he send for help as he

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did for oor Jock? Though thae Edinburgh doctors ken hoo tae chairge, the Glen wad gledly pay them twice owre raither than let the laddie slip awa'."

"It's a bonnie hert that Janet hes, an' her love I'll be thinkin' o' most," said Archie Stewart, the shepherd from the hills. "It's sorry I'll be for the lassie gin she disna' win love's reward, syne she hes focht sae bravely for't."

"Ye're richt there," said Kirsty Robertson, who had approached them unseen, "ye're richt there, Airchie, an' gin ye saw the lassie sittin' haddin' his han', an' chasin' the Black Angel awa' wi' her bonnie e'en, ye wad be prood in yir sorrow, that God sent her tae the Glen."

The elders crowded round Kirsty to listen.

"'Hoo's Alan?' Gey far through, an' haverin' about a croon o' gold, an' sayin' poetry, an' makin' stories by the dizzen. Aye, gey far through."

"'Am I thinkin' he's gaun to leave us?' Na, no' while the doctor's fechtin' sae hard,

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an' there's a man in the Glen 'll help him. I aye said that Enochdhu didna ken his value, an', ma certes, I'm mair sure o't noo. We're no worthy o' sic a man. Dae ye ken whit he's daein'?"

The circle closed around her eagerly.

"Tae save the laddie, an' gi'e him strength, if he's no' takin' the bluid oot o' his ain airm an' pitten it into Alan's! He disna' think we ken, but Janet saw the mark on the laddie's airm an' speirt at him. If he didna lauch an' wunner whit the lassie wad be sayin' next. He widna tell a lee tae save a patient's life, but Truth maun aye be oot coortin' when he speaks aboot himsel'. I'm thinkin' he's the biggest leear in a' the Glen, an' ye'll no' be daein' yir duty as elders if ye dinna mak' a trial o' him for his sins!"

Each of us felt a rush at his heart, and became assured of victory. At that moment the kirk bell stopped, and we entered the House of Prayer, but our hearts, for a time, were away at Tomnamoan, moving us to grip the doctor by the hand, and to indulge

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in words that would have given that humble man a dread of ever meeting us again.

Before the young minister came to the long prayer, Archie Stewart slipped out of the kirk and commenced running towards Tomnamoan. In a short time he spied a man in front, and quickened his pace. Nearing the farmstead he came up to him, and saw, by the look in his eye, that Sandy Graham had the same purpose in his heart. Together they came to the house, and entered the sick room, where was the wee doctor himself, his coat off, his arm bare, with an instrument in his right hand !

Without a word the two men threw off their coats, and held out a bare arm, bowing their heads and blushing in confusion. The doctor, astonished, fell back for a moment. Then he looked them each in the eye and understood.

“ Kirsty ! ” he cried. “ It’s Kirsty’s daein’. . . . It’s the first time she has betrayed me, but I’ll never forgi’e her ! ” And he looked on the ground as a man ashamed.

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Without further word he took Archie's strong arm, and drew from it a stream of pure, rich blood, at the sight of which his eyes sparkled. Then he took Alan's feeble arm and poured into his veins the warm blood of life. As it flowed away, a life-giving stream, a smile spread over the doctor's face, whereat Archie and Sandy rejoiced together. The deed done, each of these men slipped away, abashed and confused, without word or look, as if they had been guilty of a great crime.

That night, to give Kirsty and Janet a rest, I sat up with Alan, and shall never forget the things I heard. In his delirium his genius abounded. His words were on fire and steeped in colour. His thoughts were as flashes of light, dazzling and overpowering. His imagination scaled the heights of poetry, and gave expression to concepts beautiful and quaint. His pen was ever playing with the strange forms that the caprice of wild genius sent bounding through his brain. Caught away, in exquisite admiration,

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I followed him in his flights, till myself was delirious with delight. Now a poem would flow from him, of subtle thought, pretty fancy, and perfect finish, that alone would have made a reputation. Not till he was done could I think to take it down, and, oft as I began he would commence another even more beautiful and quaint. Then the heroes of a drama would come upon the scene, and speak with thrilling power. Bit by bit the delirious brain wrought out an elaborate plot, delightfully fresh and original, but still more remarkable for the knowledge and insight the workings revealed.

Through all the delirium, however, one thought kept running. He was fighting for a crown. It kept dangling before his eyes, and he would rise to reach it ; but, oft as he stretched out his hand, it vanished, and he would fall back with a sigh. For a moment he would lie silent and still as death. Then, slowly and softly his lips would open, and his voice, in perfect sympathy, recite a poem or tell a tale with a charm or beauty beyond

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the others. And then the crown would dangle before his eyes again, only to vanish as oft as he rose to reach it. But as morning dawned delirium ceased, and peaceful sleep came stealing o'er his brain.

For a week Archie Stewart came to Tomnamoan, and bared his arm and gave his blood, to win for Janet love's reward. At first, it seemed as if it were in vain, but before the week had gone delirium had ceased, and the pure, healthy stream had given life to the dying man.

"We've won, Archie, we've won," cried the doctor, exulting in victory. "We've won, an' a greater triumph the Glen has never seen. I wunner whit the Lunnon folk'll say. Ma certes, they'll open their e'en!" And he nearly went delirious with joy. His professional rivalry was as keen as his hatred of death.

Archie only smiled as he put on his coat to go. At the door Janet met him.

"It's a brave thing ye've done, Airchie Stewart, an' God'll no forget it. Tak' a

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lassie's thanks frae a hert that's fu' o' gladness. The Glen'll mind ye for it, and Alan'll rise up to praise ye."

"It's you the Glen'll mind, Janet Graham, you and yir love sae bonnie. And noo ye'll hae love's reward," said Archie, as he beat a hurried retreat.

At a bend in the road, Gordon and his shepherds lay in wait, and lustily cheered him as he passed. Alarmed, he commenced to run as if for his life. But his pace was not so fast as a week ago, or his limbs so strong!

Five minutes later Archie heard the cheer again. In a twinkling, the wee doctor dashed past him in his trap, guilty of rash and furious driving. And, as he passed, Archie joined in the cheer with all his might. Then, recollecting himself, he took fright, and bolted after the runaway doctor.

In six weeks Alan was up and out among the heather. The purple flowers were just breaking, and the bees making the richest and best of honey. The corn in the fields of Faskally was fair, said Janet, as the hair of

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little Colin, and the wheat as deep as gold.
With every breath Alan drank in new life,
and soon was romping the Glen with Janet
by his side, strong and hearty as in the brown
autumn of long ago.

He has since published two volumes of poems that have been much appreciated, while the historical sketch has been worked into a romance that has taken the literary world by storm, and brought much honour to Enochdhu. It was followed next season by another, even more powerful and romantic, which was hailed as the work of a literary genius, and is said to have earned an enduring place in the literature of the nineteenth century.

Since that day many quaint and beautiful things have left his pen full of Keltic colour and lofty fancy, and pure as the great white heart of the Father-God. Some of them I picked out at once as the creations of his delirium that wild night years ago when he fought for his crown of gold.

OF A DOMINIE

I.
A MAKER OF MEN.

WE were wary of passing judgment in the Glen, and took our time before affirming an opinion of strangers. Our method had the advantages of certainty and finality, and the additional advantage of economy of speech. It was recognised all round that the stranger was under probation, and must work out his own salvation with fear and trembling. During probation he was simply looked at and speech concerning him was limited to the prospects of his farm. The eye of the Glen followed him through his steading, in the kirk, and at the market, yet no one seemed to be paying him the slightest notice. The setting of his neaps, and the prices he got at Kinlochy, and the bend of his head in prayer,

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were considered matters of great importance, though the final judgment rested on the fabric of his mental and moral character. And if we were slow we were sure ; in no case do I remember this judgment to have been reversed.

How it came about I do not know, but always this magisterial function was performed for us by two families in the Glen. For generations their forbears had performed it, and a good reputation had to be maintained. And if, at any time, they failed to agree or hit the mark the Glen would have been astounded. So if any one happened to see Ballantine of Balintoul and Fergusson of Faskally meet, quite casually, some time after harvest, he might be sure the Court had met and that judgment would soon be delivered.

Cannily did our judges approach the issue.

“The hairst wes lang a-comin’ the year.
I dinna mind seein’ sae muckle weet for
mony seasons back. The sheep seem’d tae
ken o’t an’ keepit weel doon the breist o’ the
brae. . . . But the puckle aits hedna a

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bad colour, an' could hae been waur in the heid!"

What reference this had to the stranger it would have been difficult for you to have said. But Fergusson's magisterial scent was keen.

"I'm hearin' that up Rannoch wy the stooks are oot in the fields yet, an' no likely to be got in before Halloween. . . The straw wesna sae clean as I've seen't, but a guid hicht!"

"We maun be thankfu' the neaps are shapin' weel. Gin the Swedes come on we'll warstle through the winter wi' care. . . . There's nae denyin' the young bull traivels brawly . . . though he'd be mair likely tae mak a man gin he wesna sae slow in the uptak!"

"Weel, we'll hope the frost'll no come and nip them. . . . I've seen many a waur calf . . . but he'll dae!"

The following Sunday they gave the stranger a nod as he entered the kirk—his first friendly nod—and Enochdhu knew it

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was well. Next market day he was asked into Fisher's at Kinloch, and treated to whisky to the full extent of his capacity. And after that he entered into all the privileges of the Glen, to be helped and befriended, come foul weather or fair, till we laid him with our fathers in the kirkyard on the hill.

But it was different when Dominie Sinclair came to the Glen. When we wanted a schoolmaster — which happened twice only in the century — we went to the Principal of Glasgow University, and asked him to send us a man. In no case had our fathers regretted his choice, and this, no doubt, favoured the Dominie. At any rate the judgment in his case was unprecedented, and remains to this day our record. Five weeks after his coming Ballantine delivered himself.

“ The corn's green in the fields a-ready,
an' the weather's keepin' fine. . . Tak ma
word for't, Ferg., he's the man ! ”

“ Ay,” answered Fergusson. “ The lam-

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bin's pass'd withoot a hitch, an' its bonnie tae see them loupin' in the sun. . . Ay, ay, Bal., he'll dae!"

Extraordinary as this judgment was, Gordon of Tomnamoan capped it with a stroke of genius.

"I'll stake ma ferm on't, freens, he's a maker o' men, a maker o' men!"

It is only fair to Balintoul and Faskally to say that Gordon had called at the school-house twice—on the pretence of fetching young Tam tae mind the kye—and had listened, with his eye to the keyhole, while the Dominie was delivering a heroic on Thermopylae.

Next to preaching, the "hymn of dialectic" was most honoured in the Glen, and so when the Dominie showed skill in intellectual fence, his position was assured for life. Smiddie Bob, a giant in stature, was our champion in debate, and much affected by the philosophy of Berkeley and Hume. Like all Scotsmen, he was proud and self-opinionative, yet ready to recognise intellectual

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strength and worship it. No man was keener in debate, and no man kinder to the boys, or more encouraging to our youths, as they launched their trembling barks on the wide sea of Truth. He raced a thought as keenly as his hound raced a hare ; and when he had beaten his man he shook him with as much relish as his dog did its victim. With him, on his coming, therefore, the Dominie had a fierce fight. For a month they discussed " Kant's Contribution to Thought, in relation especially to Berkeley and Hume," and so sadly did the Dominie harass his logic that Smiddie was smitten dumb for nine days, and, thereafter, resigned all pretensions to lead the speculations of the Glen.

When the Dominie came to Enochdhu, Waterloo had just been won, and when he left it for oor lang hame, France once more had been laid in the dust. Yet during all that time his intellectual supremacy lasted, and never was more undoubted than when his face was full of furrows and his hair white as snow.

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It is round the auld schule-house my fondest memories gather. It lay in a dell at the head of the Pass, surrounded with silver birches, and had once been a Roman Catholic chapel. Where the altar had stood now rested the Dominie's desk, while the bell that used to announce the elevation of the host now called us to our tasks. It is here the Dominie stands enshrined with glory. I can see him dimly in the light of a peat fire, when, without, the snow lay deep in the Glen and the flakes were driving the light from the windows. And I see him clearly in the blaze of a summer morn when the windows are wide open, and, through the jessamine and roses, comes the singing of birds and the sound of the babbling Garry. He is tall and slim, and already his shoulders have begun to stoop and his hand to tremble. His face is strong and kindly, while from under his brow, broad and square, shine deep brown eyes, beautiful with light and mystic depth. His left leg limps badly, and, as he hobbles in his gown to the black-board, the effect is

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often ludicrous. But we remember how he won his wound, and tighten our mouths, and drive away our smiles. It was a brave deed, and made him our hero.

This gown, once black, now green with age, was the pride of the school. It was of silk and had belonged, our fathers told us, to a great philosopher—Thomas Reid, said some; Dugald Stewart, said others; Kant himself, said Smiddie Bob's son, on his father's authority. Be that as it may, there was not a boy but strove for the honour of wearing it one day. Now and again we would evade the Dominie and try it on, each in turn grandly strutting up and down the room and smiling proudly on the other boys eagerly waiting their turn. But we did this always in fear of being caught and put to shame; though we had little need, for the Dominie saw it all, and smiled, and waited for his day. That day would see one of the players a graduate of Glasgow University and honoured with a loan of the gown for his capping. It was threadbare in parts as well as green, but

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never a College laddie from the Glen but thought it the best gown worn that day. Oh, the rustling of its silken folds as we swept up to the dais, knelt, and heard the venerable principal say—*Magistrum artium creamus!* Oh, the joy with which we came back to the Glen and returned it amid the cheering of the school! Ah me, but he was proud those days—even prouder, methinks, than the new M.A. I can hear the rustling still. I can feel the joy to-day. I can see the pride upon my master's face. Linger sweetly. Tarry long! Tarry long! For the grave on the hill is green.

The curriculum of the school was never certain, but, whatever the course, a fitting education was sure. The strength of it lay in the Dominie's love of Nature and Man, the Classics and Philosophy. He gave up the rudiments to senior boys and himself passed to Geography, Literature, History and Thought. Into sympathy with the world, and men, and books, especially the culture of Greece and strength of Rome, he

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was quick to bring us. A kind of Pagan saint, by nature and grace, he read his Plato in the original, and taught us to read it too. The young minister he despised awhile, when he found him reading the *Republic* in English, and only forgave him when he proved that, though loving Jowett over-well, he had a heart of tender flesh.

Into the mysteries of life and thought he led us with firm and steady step, trusting us beyond our years and sowing for our manhood. He cast a spell around the name of God and led our spirits into the knowledge of a Presence in the Great Unseen. Like the monks of old who cleaned their quills ere they wrote the Name, the Dominie halted ere he spoke it, and, when it fell from his lips, a strange awe crept round the school. It was seldom he named it, but always in the same way, and with the same effect. I have heard great preachers in Edinburgh and London. I have listened to the voice of mighty cardinals in the shades of St. Peter's at Rome, and to the prayers of eastern

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patriarchs in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. I have caught the whispers of saintly Sisters of Mercy and pious monks of St. Francis. But never one of them named the name of God with that power with which the Dominie led our spirits into touch with the Great Unseen.

Among the ancients he loved Homer, and Sophocles, and Horace, and Virgil, and Marcus Aurelius, and, above all, Plato, son of Ariston, and into the joys of his loves he was quick to lead us. Whether the wrath of Achilles, or the adventures of Odysseus, or the sorrows of Antigone, or the trials of Socrates, or the love of Chloe, or the sacrifice of Dido, or the meditations of the Pagan Saint, we were swept on by his love till a spark of his gladness at last fired our minds. What though he carried us often beyond our depth and left us in mystery beating for land? 'Twas the method of the eagles on the crags round Enochdhu, and, like the eaglets, we were so taught to fit our wings for higher flights.

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Of moderns he loved passionately Shakespeare, and Wordsworth, and Thomas Carlyle. He was the first in the Glen to see the splendour of the prophet's star, and he gloried in its brightness till the end. With what exalted ecstasy he read to us the "Everlasting Yea"! With what passion he called us to be true! What scorn he heaped upon a lie! What heights he put before the soul! With mystic fervour he poured forth the "Ode to Immortality," and with catching joy, the Master's matchless Sonnets, but ever he returned to Carlyle. Next to the day on which first they hear their son proclaim the great evangel, University Graduation Day is, perhaps, the proudest in the annals of Scottish parents. Then they will travel many miles to see their Donald capped, and lay up in their hearts, till their dying day, the cheers that greeted him as he went up for his degree and came back decked with the bonnie hood. Three sons brought this joy to the Dominie's heart, yet only twice, during all his sojourn with us, did he leave the Glen—once to

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bring a prodigal home to his dying mother, and once to hear Thomas Carlyle deliver his Rectorial Address. Verily he loved him !

This was not the sort of education that a School Board would approve, and, no doubt, it had its limitations. I am not sure that half the boys could have passed a decent matriculation examination, but for compensation they lived in an atmosphere that made them thinkers, and critics, and lovers of Nature, Literature, and God. Mathematics, in fact, were scarce attempted by the Dominie. It was whispered that had it not been for the Professor of Moral Philosophy speaking to the Mathematical examiners he would never got his degree ; his brain was not made for figures. So the College lads had to go to Angus Smith, postman and mathematician to the Glen, for anything beyond the Rule of Three. Angus had taken to figures like a ferret to rabbit holes, and meditated on symbols and formulæ like a mystic on the Book of Revelations. While he was postman in the Glen he

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travelled 317,000 miles, and, during his long journeys, he worked out great mathematical problems, all in his head, scorning the use of slate and pencil. He was long and lanky, and big-boned, but he knew as much of the Binomial Theorem and Conic Sections as most men, and found the joys of life in exposing the slips of Euclid. Each new discovery put new health into his weather-beaten body, and, when he had found all, he pined and fretted until he died. You may not believe this, but every boy in the Glen does.

Though a School Board would not approve the Dominie's curriculum, the fathers of Enochdhu knew it was the sort to make scholars and men. If you had stuck out for statistics they would have handed you this list with pride. Seven of the Dominie's scholars swept Perth Academy of its coveted prizes. Three took the Snell Exhibition at Glasgow University. Three went to Baliol and made their mark at Oxford. Two of these returned to their Alma Mater as Assistant Professors,

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and to-day grace chairs in a Northern University. The other having come out first in the entrance Scholarship at Glasgow, and first for the "Snell," and first in the London matriculation and Indian Civil Service examinations, and having so earned for himself £400 a year while yet the down lay on his cheek, went to India and became a judge of high degree. One, who could never do a simple sum and spent his time in scribbling verses, is now a poet honoured throughout the land. Another went to Auld Reekie and was "lost" awhile. But, one day, it was noised abroad that a man there had given "style" to two of the greatest writers of the day, and, it was found that the man was young Duncie Broon, son of the Shepherd up the Ben!

Oh, the happy days with the Dominie in the auld Schule-house in the Glen where first our eyes were opened to the glory of the world, as, through the windows, came the scent of roses and the sound of the babbling Garry! Oh, the tinkling of the bell that

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told the elevation of the host and called us to our tasks ; its notes are ringing in my ears to-day—sweet bell ! Oh, the visions of Nature, Truth, and God that rise from the altar there, as, with hushed voice, the Dominie names the Name and leads our awed spirits into Twilight athrob with Angel's wings ! Oh, the music of his speech and the light in his eye ! . . Too short those days. Too glad to last. Ah me, what sorrows have rolled between ! What wounds been borne ! What tears been shed ! Yet, through the mists, they break anew ablaze with hope and joy. How beautiful to me is the Dominie and the auld Schule-house in this joyous light ! How much more to play-mates toiling in distant lands ! Ah, their eyes are moist, to-day, as they look on the vision from afar. But, one day, whether judge or shepherd, merchant or poet, they hope to come home at last, and make their way to the auld Schule-house again, and gaze, and gaze on it, awhile, ere they rest them with the Dominie in the kirk-yard on the hill.

II.

THE WEIGHT OF A SNOWFLAKE.

It was a lovely autumn and the Dominie feasted his soul on the glory. If you have lived in the country and have watched the seasons come and go all your life, you cannot hope to know the Dominie's joy. Only the townsman lured to her haunts and left to her solitude, does Nature surprise, and charm, and awe in this fashion. Like most such, the Dominie had fought wide of the country, deeming it beautiful indeed, and good for an outing in summer, but lonely and unendurable for all the year round. His first autumn in Enochdhu surprised him, and the glory of five autumns now lay on his life. But the beauty of this beat them all.

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It was as if Nature had conspired to win his soul for ever with one matchless display. The heather on the mountains bloomed early. Far as the eye could reach, the hills were aglow with purple. High up the Bens the royal colour spread and sought to reach the loftiest peaks. A long while it waited ere it changed to palest buff and turned to deepest gold. Meanwhile the bracken in the Pass had begun to change, and the trees to turn. The silver birches festooned in the still air and shot occasional leaves of lightest gold. The chesnuts, and elms, and beeches came on apace with glowing crimson, blushing pink, and deep Pompeian red. In the heart of the Pass the effect was overpowering. High up on either side, and away along the winding paths, blazed and spread the dazzling colours. And, as if Nature saw the Dominie was overpowered, she lingered, that he might never win over the spell. The brown of the heather waited. The gold of the birches rested a while. The crimson of the chestnuts lingered long. Pale blushing

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pinks and deep Pompeian reds, with all their varied following, surpassing the dream of man, the power of painter, or the fancy of poet, floated in the still air. The sun played on the buffs of the mountains, shot the gold of the birches, and lay like a fire on the chestnuts. And the Dominie's ravished soul was rapt with wonder, awe, and worship.

Nature had conquered, had stolen to the depths of a deep heart, had drawn one more choice spirit from out the common throng, had whispered mystic words and stirred mysterious feelings in that wonderland within us all, beyond the reach of thought, or ken of mind. Thenceforth the Dominie became Her High Priest in the Glen.

Morning by morning he had risen early to view the splendour, and evening by evening he had watched it fade away in the dusk. But one day he woke to find it gone. A keen North wind had come, like a thief in the night, and spoiled the Pass of its glory. Crimson and gold, crimson and gold, lay on the ground on every hand ; above the green

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of the turf, and the brown of the bracken, a wealth of crimson and gold. The Dominie gazed at it with piteous eyes and a feeling akin to tears. But the old folks only shook their heads, and laid in plenty of peat and firewood.

Through the bare trees the North wind blew for nigh a month. Every leaf lay on the ground. The black trunks stood like stunned giants and spread their naked branches in the keen air. Through the Pass the Dominie wandered, beholding the desolation. Soon a sense of space crept over him, and grew, till he breathed deeply and freely, as if rid of some gorgeous robe that had hung too heavily. The sky seemed higher, the mountains clearer, the cattle on the hills big and near. And the whistle of the robin and the ripple of the Garry sounded loud in the clear, crisp air.

Toward the end of the month the wind ceased. There was an ominous hush. Even the sheep lifted their heads and scented the coming storm. The horses in the fields

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neighed, and tossed their heads, and moved uneasily, then looked toward the North with necks extended, and sniffed the air, and turned, and ran toward the South, and turned again, and faced the North neighing. The collies in the steadings barked by day and howled as night drew on. The shepherds drove the cattle to safe keeping and strove to silence the collies. They slept little that night, for, to the Highland shepherd, there is only one thing worse even than the cry of a wounded lamb, the wail of his dog by night.

It waited till morning. Then the wind rose and blew keenly. And with the wind came the snow. You could have counted the flakes at first, one here, one there, great rich fleecy flakes. But as you looked, they multiplied and came in hundreds, thousands, millions, greater, richer, fleecier than before.

The Dominie stood at the Schùle-house door, waiting for his scholars. But mothers heard the North wind calling :—

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“Keep in yir wains! Keep in yir wains!”

And the Dominie waited in vain.

And, as he waited, he caught a snowflake and held it on his finger tip and tried to weigh it. Failing, he darted into the Schule-house and came back with a tiny pair of apothecaries' scales. He caught some snowflakes and weighed them.

“Ten snowflakes make one scruple! How many will a hundred weigh? A thousand? a million? How many will lie on Ben Vrackie? Schiehallion? The Glen? And, suppose it snows all day, to what will it all come?”

The Dominie's arithmetic was being sorely taxed, when Angus Smith, the postman, came to the rescue.

“Mair than the Garry wad be able tae cairry. ‘An’ if for twa days or three’? Mair than the Glen wad be able tae bear . . Here's a letter for ye—a wumman's haun, but no' yir mither's. . . I maun hurry on ma

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room the day. It'll be a gey wheen, I'm thinkin', afore the roads are open again."

The snow kept falling all day. The Dominie watched it for hours. His arithmetic had long since reached figures approaching infinitude. Such snowflakes he had never seen before—never would see again. They turned the day into twilight, and brought on night before its hours were due. In the twilight came Smiddy Bob's son with a supply of food from his mother. The Dominie watched him come and go, and noticed that the snow reached to his knees. That was the last mortal he saw for three days.

The second morning found the snow half way up the Dominie's door and window. He lighted his fire in the darkened room and made ready for another lonely day. The snow continued falling. The wind had risen and kept whirling and driving the flakes into drifts. The twilight this day was deeper, and hid the clachan completely from his view. He lit his lamp and read "a wumman's haun," but no' his mither's, all day long.

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The third morning found it snowing still. The Dominie's door and window were completely covered. He woke and found himself in total darkness. He rose and went up to his garret and saw it was day. The twilight this day was deep as a Glasgow fog—murky, leaden, infernal. He lit the lamp and answered the “wumman's haun,” no' his mither's.

The fourth morning dawned bright and dazzling. The Dominie looked out of his garret window. Snow, snow, everywhere, far up the Glen, away to the mountain peaks, glistening in the sunshine, too bright for the eyes of man. Such a mass of snow he had never seen, never would see again. He looked for the clachan and saw only a great wave of snow with broken spray here and there. The wave was made by the houses, and the spray by their chimneys.

And, as he looked, a man rose out of the tallest chimney and began to ring a bell. The Dominie strained his eyes and saw it

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was the smiddie "lum" and that the man was Smiddy Bob.

Smiddy Bob kept ringing the bell for an hour. The sound of it troubled the depths of the wave. In a dozen places the crest trembled and broke. As it broke, men came from its depths and waved their hands to Smiddy Bob. They had hewn their way through their garret windows and were standing on the roofs of their houses.

Smiddy Bob kept ringing the bell. The men on the houses put their hands to their ears. The Dominie listened intently.

"The gless is risin'. It's sure tae come a frost. We maun dig each ither oot. Start at yir ain doors, an' as we meet, we'll come an' help ye."

The voice seemed to come from a far country. It was rich and deep, Smiddy Bob's surely, but muffled with the mass of snow.

On the third day after this the Dominie was dug out, and on the fourth the village was clear. Paths were hewn through the snow,

The Weight of a Snowflake.

always over ten, in parts over twenty feet deep. In two places it was so high that they cut a tunnel through it. In the Pass, by the Soldier's Leap, the Garry itself was lost in a cavern of snow. The sky kept blue and bright, the glass steady, and so the frost seemed sure to last. What then of the manse, and the kirk, and the outlying farms? Every man and woman in the clachan set to work to dig them out. The Dominie led one company and Smiddy Bob the other.

The Postman dug by the side of the Dominie.

“ ‘Ten snowflakes mak' yae scruple,' did ye say, Dom.? Then 1,000,000 snowflakes mak 347 lbs. Noo, there's juist aboot hauf a million in a cubic yard.

$\therefore 1 \text{ cubic yard} = 173\frac{1}{2} \text{ lbs.}$

$\therefore 1 \text{ sq. acre (9 ft. deep)} = 2,519,220 \text{ lbs.} =$
1120 tons.

$\therefore 1 \text{ sq. mile (9 ft. deep)} = 720,000 \text{ tons.}$
An' it's mair than nine feet deep, an' there's near a hunner square miles! God hae mercy on us when it thaws!”

The Weight of a Snowflake.

For three weeks the frost lasted and they walked between the cliffs of snow. The way to the manse had been opened up and the roads to the outlying farms—all except Faskally. It was strange to toil up the hill to the kirk between those banks of snow. It was awful, though grand, to view from its height the great expanse of white. Every man bowed his head, and cried,

“God hae mercy on us when it thaws!”

Then came the change. The children had begun to come to schule (finding huge delight in the tunnels on the way), and the men to go about their daily toil. But, when the hush came, their faces blanched.

The smoke from the smiddie “lum” trembled on its way, was slowly beaten back, rose and went straight up to heaven, for an hour or more, trembled again, and waited awhile, ere it sailed away to the north. The sky came nearer. Leaden clouds gathered round the mountain peaks, and crept down the hills. The snow began to soften and the paths to give way. The clouds drew

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nearer still. Then the rain came down in torrents, and night came on.

The roar of the Garry woke the Dominie early next morning. The noise of the waters as they rushed past the schule-house was deafening. On the surface were trees, trunks and branches, cattle, sheep and oxen, and countless possessions from farm and forest. The rain still came down steadily, and the melted snow ran from the mountains. Every burn had become a river, and every stream a torrent, and the Garry a weltering mass of tumultuous waters.

Toward noon the rain ceased. But the roads were utterly impassable (slush and snow many feet deep), and remained so for five days. Meanwhile the river rose, day by day, until it overflowed its banks, and came, bit by bit, to the schule-house itself. Such a thing had never happened in the memory of the Glen.

"What like will it be down at Faskally?" the Dominie asked himself as he watched the flood of waters. And, when, on the fifth day,

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the clachan could venture out, that was the one question they asked each other. Archie Stewart came down from the Ben (he must have swam down), and Gordon from Tomnamoan, and Ballantine from Balintoul, and all their thoughts were of Faskally. And, as they talked, the auld minister himself came down from the manse on the hill (he, too, must have swam down), and told that the waters were sweeping Faskally away.

“To Faskally,” cried every man and woman in the clachan, and set off, in haste, on their dangerous journey.

The auld minister went at their head, his white hair floating in the breeze. The road was still deep with slush and snow, and the water ran across it from the mountains above, down into the Pass, and into the weltering, whirling, rushing, thundering Garry. In parts, where the drifts had been great, we had to wade through the slush up to the waist. But, on we went, through all, slush, and water, and snow, slipping and stumbling

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many times, on, for an hour, till we came to the uplands of Faskally.

Down in the strath lay the house surrounded with the flood of waters. Between it and the road the torrent was full three hundred yards wide ; while beyond was the rushing river. Already the outhouses had been carried away, and now the waters were running through the broken windows of the house itself. Fergusson, with his wife, and mother, stood at a window on the first floor, and waited.

What could be done? No one could wade across, for the waters were deep. No one could swim, for they were swift and laden with debris.

"There's the fishing punt," whispered the joiner, ashamed of his own suggestion.

"Could it live in such a sea?"

"We'll try," cried the Dominie and Smiddie Bob together.

And the men cheered as if assured of victory.

We dragged the punt up the flood to allow

The Weight of a Snowflake.

for the current, and tied ropes round the heroes, that, if the craft should be capsized they might yet have a chance to escape. "God pity them," we thought, "gin it comes tae that!"

Smiddie Bob took the oars, and Dominie the helm. If, when a boy, you have played at "Shipwreck," and watched the tossing of of your toy-boat in the bucket, into which your playfellow was pumping water with all his might, you can fancy how the punt rolled upon the flood. It was caught in the whirlpools and tossed round like a toy-ship, and, oft as it escaped the pools, it was seized by branches and other debris, and carried down stream, so that we expected it to go to the bottom many times. But, by dint of wise steering and hard pulling, at last, they drew near the house.

"Catch!" cried Dominie, casting a line.

But Fergusson failed to hold it, and the punt was swept down the flood for nigh a mile before they could bring it to land again.

Undaunted, we dragged the craft up stream

The Weight of a Snowflake.

once more, and Smiddie Bob with the Dominie set out again, furnished with a boat-hook. Even more than before was the punt whirled by the pools and struck by the debris. Thrice did screams go up from the women, as they saw it caught by a trunk and tossed by the waters, till, it seemed, as if it must be dashed to pieces, or sunk in the flood. Thrice, in the mercy of God, it escaped, and thrice righted itself, and went on its way. Thus, through great peril, and much labour, they came to the house again.

In breathless suspense we watched the Dominie throw the line again.

“Caught! Thank God?”

Our shout of joy ran over the waters and heartened the heroes at their task.

With the aid of the boat-hook, Dominie brought the punt beneath the window, though how he kept it from washing against the gable, Smiddie Bob never could tell.

Fergusson had been injured by the falling of an outhouse and was utterly exhausted. His wife and mother were speechless,

The Weight of a Snowflake.

stunned with the terrors they had borne. His two boys were sleeping on a bed, with arms thrown wearily out, and faces deep in their pillows, as if worn out with sleepless nights of care.

With much difficulty, Dominie lowered Fergusson and the women into the punt.

Then a tree-trunk came down the stream and swept them away.

"Ma weans! Ma weans!" cried the mother, starting from her stunned state. "Kenneth, Kenneth! Donal', Donal'!"

And the children heard their mother's voice, and came running to the window, only to see her borne away by the flood, and find themselves alone amid the waste of waters. No wonder they wrung their hands, and wept, and, no wonder Fergusson groaned aloud, as he lay on the floor of the flood-tossed boat.

It was with great strain Dominie brought the punt to land. Time, and again, we thought they must have perished. Twice it seemed as if they had sunk in whirlpools,

The Weight of a Snowflake.

and thrice as if trunks of trees must have capsized them. But, through it all they reached the shore, full a mile southward, amid a shout of triumph such as never had been heard in the Glen. The women had swooned, and Smiddie Bob, the giant of Enochdhu, had spent his last bit of strength.

Leaving them to the tender care of our women, we made haste to the help of the bairns. We dragged the punt up stream again, and cheered the Dominie as we went. Archie Stewart now took the oars, and Dominie the helm once more. And there was not a man amongst us but would have seized it in his stead, and kept him on land, had we only foreknown what was destined to happen.

Archie Stewart rowed well, and Dominie brought his craft out of many dangers. We cheered each victory and urged them on with joyful shouts. And, when the Dominie threw his line, and swung the punt beneath the window, we shouted ourselves hoarse with gladness.

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Dominie leapt into the room, and took Donal' and lowered him into the punt. We saw him take hold of Kenneth and begin to lower him also. Then our hearts stood still, and our cheers gave place to loud cries of pain. The line had snapped, and the punt, with Archie and Donal', was being swept away!

Dominie drew Kenneth back from the flood of waters. We saw him pass his hand over his brow, look up into the sky, and take the child by the hand. We watched them standing, hand in hand, gazing after the punt together, till it was thrown on the beach, far down the stream. We saw him take the rope from his waist, and bind Kenneth to his back. We saw him wave his hand to us, and make signs for us to pull. And we remembered our prayer, "God pity them, gin it comes tae that!"

Then there was a loud splash, louder than the rush of many waters, and the house of Faskally was swept away.

The Weight of a Snowflake.

We pulled them to land as fast as we could, and laid them out for dead.

But the wee doctor laughed us to scorn.

Kenneth, though bruised and bleeding, was whole of every limb. And the Dominie, though stunned, and sore in every part, would have walked home, an hour afterwards, had not his left leg been broken in two places.

That left leg limped ever afterwards, yet each succeeding generation in the Glen honoured it more than the right. It could not carry him home to-day, but it brought him the hero-worship of every schule-boy in Enochdhu, till that far-off summer-day we laid him with our fathers in the kirkyard on the hill.

III.
THE WHITE ROSE OF
ENOCHDHU.

IT was not till after the great flood that the Dominie's love was known. We had wondered oft what lay in his silent heart, but no man had spoken. And few dreamt of the sorrow hidden there, whose face we saw only in part, till near the end.

Angus Smith—who knew the symbol of love as well as that of infinity, and carried a heavy burden all his years—was the medium of its proclamation to the Glen. There is a sympathy which draws together men with kindred sorrows. The Dominie felt it, and spoke. He was lying in bed, his left leg bound in splints, and Angus had called in for letters.

The White Rose of Enochdhu.

"I'm gled the flood's gaun doon, an' I'm rael sorry for Fergusson. . . . But there's waur things than loss o' hoose an' gear."

"Ay," answered Angus, catching the accent.

"It wesna ma mither's," went on the Dominie, "but——" and he hesitated.

"Mirren Gray's," put in Angus, remembering a letter Dominie had posted five years before, and yet another when the North wind swept the crimson and gold.

The Dominie nodded, and smiled.

"Wonderfu's the poo'er o' love, Angus, an', maist o' a', a wumman's."

"Ay," echoed the postman's heart, "gin she love ye!"

The Dominie took from under his pillow the letter in the "wumman's haun." It had been through the flood with him, and the ink had run, so that the writing was blotted and blurred, but it was the most beautiful thing in the world to the Dominie. At the

The White Rose of Enochdhu.

sight of it, his eyes filled with love-light, and his lips trembled with passion.

“ Read it,” he cried, handing it to Angus.
“ An’ keep in mind it’s only ane o’ hundreds that gang through the post ilka year.”

Angus, who carried the secrets of all the Glen, and never told one, refrained a moment.

“ For a memorial o’ love and a testimony tae men,” urged the Dominie,

Then Angus lifted the letter, and read :—

“ MA DEAR DAVIE,

“ I got yir letter yestreen, an’ wept for joy. I’ve waited for it ilka day through five lang years, an’ aye ma hert kept tellin’ me—‘ It’ll come! It’ll come!’ There’s no been a mornin’ syne ye gaed awa’ but I’ve waken’d tae think o’ ye in the lanely Glen, an’ tae pray that ye’d be led tae see that Love honours a’ things. It wes a sair disappointment tae ye, an’ fine I ken hoo muckle yir hert wes set on’t, but disappointments an’ social changes mak’ little difference tae a true wumman’s love. For sure ma hert’s the same the day as that

The White Rose of Enochdhu.

bricht sunny efternune ye drew its secret
frae me aside the gairden spring. An' a'
nicht it's been cryin', cryin'—'I'll come! I'll
come!' an' widna be still an' let me sleep.
Sae, Davie, ma answer maun just be whit
ma hert is cryin'—'I'll come, Davie darlin',
I'll come!'

“Yir ain lovin' lass,

“MIRREN GRAY.”

“I wad gie a' I hae, Dom—siller, gear,
life, a'—tae get the like frae mine!” cried
Angus, his heart swept with love. “But
why——”

Dominie knew he would ask why he had
waited so long, and, in turn, refrained.

“No the nicht,” he answered at length.
“I've tried tae mak' amends noo . . . an'
hae asked her tae come richt awa. . . . Post
it for me, gin ye go, an' prepare tae see a
new glory enter Enochdhu.”

It was nearly fifty years ere he spake the
word that told his sorrow, and by that time
our Mathematician long since had drank of
the Fount of Love.

The White Rose of Enochdhu.

"She'll write a white chapter in the annals o' the Glen, will Mirren Gray," said Angus to himself as he stamped the Dominie's letter.

And, later, that same night, he startled Smiddie Bob by asking :

"Why is a wumman like God?"

Smiddie was forced to confess that his speculations had never approached the question, and that neither Berkeley, nor Hume, offered any answer.

"Because she waits an' waits, an' loves an' loves, till love prevails, an' gaithers tae hersel' a' prodigals, an' wanderers, an' lost. That is gin she loves ye," said Angus. . . .

"But . . . gin she disna?"

Smiddie Bob declared he saw the stars reflected in his een, when the Mathematician turned, and, slowly, walked away.

She came, a graceful woman, with soft winning speech and cultured bearing, whose face was so sweet that, when you looked on it, you became a child again, without iniquity or guile. From the day she entered the

The White Rose of Enochdhu.

Glen she was like a fragrance permeating its life, a smile gladdening its heart, a halo resting on its upward striving. And all men saw it and were glad. For even the dullard beheld the glory.

"A white rose," cried Gordon of Tomnamoan, "white as driven snow."

"Wi' the sun glintin' on its hert, an' makin' it blush juist the palest o' pinks!" added Ballantine of Balintoul.

"An' the angels o' God ascending and descending tae taste its sweetness," concluded Archie Stewart, the mystic of the Ben.

From the first, she took up her place by the schule-house gate, and it is there, beside the white rose-tree, that memory fondly shows her. There she stood, and welcomed the children, as they came to schule—smiling on all, patting the back of some, and cheering the slow bairns on. And aye the Host-bell rang too soon for the cluster gathered round her knee. There she stood, again, when the schule skailed, to wave the scholars

The White Rose of Enochdhu.

adieu. The weans and lassies got off an hour earlier than the boys, and were sure to linger at the gate awhile. There you might have seen her, with the wee'est in her arms, or with one on either hand, and a crowd gathered round her, drinking deeply of her joy. What a way she had with weans! What a vision of their souls! What a hunger for their love! And, when the boys came running to the gate, an hour later, there they found her still, her smile unspent. Even the College lads forgot their shyness, and found cause to linger by the white rose-tree. There was inspiration in these brown eyes, hope in the smile that told of conquered pain, and a purer life in the air she breathed.

There was not a bairn passed through the gate but caught of her sincerity. Tam Glen, who was silent in schule, except when he lied, and who copied under the Dominie's eyes, told tales of adventure only at the gate. He talked all the time he was in her presence, and took to fiction, really, to save his soul. Himself was always hero, true, god-

The White Rose of Enochdhu.

less enough and void of the ten commandments, but the story never flagged, and abounded in creeping fancies. That was the best in Tam, and she knew it. You know him, too, but his name is not Tam Glen.

There was not a dullard stood by the White Rose but stirred himself with lively resolutions. "Rabbit" Maclean actually got over the "Asses' Bridge" after a long visit to the tree. And, though he never finished the book, he knew more of rabbits than any man in the country-side, and named all his prize-winners (males) after the propositions of Euclid and (females) after the roses in her garden.

There was not a "failure" saw her smile, but took courage and came out all right in the end. Donald M'Donald, after seven times failing to take his degree and becoming the laughing-stock of examiners, tried once more, and won. He had a photograph and a white rose on his table.

"Rather old for you, Donald," joked the examiner. And Donald frowned.

The White Rose of Enochdhu.

"Got old while waiting, eh?" And Donald frowned still more.

"Never mind, she's winsome . . . and she has bonnie e'en."

And Donald smiled with joy.

The photograph was that of the White Rose of Enochdhu.

The secret somehow crept out (a Perth Academy man was suspected of the deed), and Donald, decked in all the glory of the Dominie's silk gown, got the cheer of the day as he swept to his capping.

There were depths lower still to which the fragrance of the White Rose descended. Sully Wullie, who was born idiotic, and possessed by many devils, was even wise and gentle by her side. He was reckoned good for nothing but to clean out Faskally's byre, and he never mastered "Three-times-three," far less "Seven-times-seven," but, for love of her, he leapt into the angry Garry, and saved her first-born son. He was fearfully mangled, when they brought him to shore, but held up the child proudly.

The White Rose of Enochdhu.

“Smile on me,” he whispered, “smile on me ance mair, Mirren Sinclair, an’ I’ll dae’t again!”

A moment later his face glowed with light, and he made to rise, and leap, but sank back in her arms, and slipped away.

Here, at this gate, too, by the white rose-tree, she set up her Confessional, and there was not a truant but found it good. Ken Fergusson was the first to try, and talked so much about it that, once in his life at least, every boy in the schule (and even a girl now and then) “plunked,” just to taste of her forgiveness. There were many other days, when the trout leaping in the Garry, and the birds nesting up the Crag, proved too much for us, but the “plunk” for her sake was always special. It was a means of grace to every boy in the Glen.

It was seldom a scholar was ill (only thrice in my school-days did it happen), but this experience was best of all. Then, and then only, she left the gate, and sat by the bed of the child. And, with her, she always brought

The White Rose of Enochdhu.

a white rose. Then, they told me, pain was turned to trembling joy.

Only once in my time did a scholar die. The day was so unique that still it stands out clearly in my memory. I can see the mourners toiling up the hill, and the sun glinting on Ben Vrackie. And I can hear the black-bird piping away down in the Pass—and the White Rose sobbing at the grave.

Not a few times, however, did old scholars return wounded from the fight, some sorely stricken, some ready for the kirkyard on the hill. The Dominie was always near at the end, and by the grave at last. He remembered the scholar and almost forgot the man. And it was sweet, they told me, sweet to die, feeling like a child again, in the Dominie's arms. But, it was the triumph of the White Rose that when she entered the room, oft the dying man revived. A flood of pleasant memories chased Death from his heart, and made him a boy again by the schule-house gate. He scented the rose and lived.

The White Rose of Enochdhu.

This was all she did, stand at the gate, and spend her life, like the white rose there, in revelations of purity and love—a sweet fragrance, a blessed influence. It may not seem much, yet it is not given to one in ten times ten thousand to do it well. And there was not a boy went to that schule but blessed her all his life for doing it. And not one who left the Glen, to do battle in great city, or foreign land, but stole to the gate, by night, and took away a bit of that white rose-tree.

I can see her now standing there in the glory of a summer morn amid a wealth of roses. I can feel the smiles rise on my cheek as her eyes fall on mine. And I can see her in the dusk of an autumn eve, by the white tree still, waving her hand to the last bairn toiling up the hill. And I can feel the thrill of sadness as I come to the turn of the mountain path and take my last look on her. And I creep back to-day, as often then, and, from behind the great brown fir, see this fair sight once more :

The White Rose of Enochdhu.

The Dominie is standing by the jessamine porch, watching her. He leaves the jessamine, and, softly, wends his way to the white rose-tree. She knows he is coming, and waits. He takes her by the hand, and says :—

“Come, Mother-angel, for all thy young have flown!”

And she turns, and smiles on him (oh, with what light in her brown eyes), and whispers,

“Davie!”

Then he kisses her twice, and leads her back through the garden, and under the jessamine porch.

I can see it all to-day as clearly as that great day I hid behind the willow in the garden. Only once did I do that : the sight was too sacred—so intensely beautiful as to give pain—when viewed so near. Oh, how their faces glowed as they passed beneath the jessamine ! And their eyes ! It was worth it all to see his alone. But hers ! Hers !

IV.

THE SEA! THE SEA!

THE White Rose cast her fragrance on the Glen full twenty years. She was nigh past bearing, and her three sons already had gone to the fight in the great world beyond Enochdhu, when she bore one son more. And in the bearing of him the Lord of the Vineyard came.

The Dominie laid her in the kirkyard on the hill, and took the white rose-bush from the garden, and put it on her grave. He had walked upright before, saving his limp, but now he leant upon a staff. And the hill became the bourne whither he wended his steps day by day. His was not a grief that wearied, or a fear that tormented, but a love that endured when flesh and heart failed. And he mourned her many days.

The Sea ! The Sea !

There are some things we can never understand till ourselves endure the like. If you have not buried husband, or wife, the life that lay in your bosom many years, you cannot dream the Dominie's woe. Once I used to wonder, and wonder yet again, why, long years after he planted the rose on her grave, he wended his way thither so oft. But now, ah me, I understand !

The babe grew into a fine boy, the picture of his mother—a white rose in the bud. For her sake, at first, then for his own, the Dominie tended him, and loved him beyond his years. For her sake, too, every boy in the Glen yielded him supremacy. And, when he grew to youth, fair and strong, there was not a maid in Enochdhu but dreamt oft of Don Sinclair.

But it spoiled him. He knew the worth of beauty of heart and limb ; there was not a kinder, or more generous spirit in all the country side. He knew the strength of passion of good and evil ; there was no devil in him beyond the lot of men. And

The Sea ! The Sea !

he knew the glory of life, of superabounding health, and tireless energy ; it straightened the shoulders to watch him run and lead the Glen in every youthful sport. But he did not know the saving virtue of self-restraint.

One summer day a troupe of singers journeyed through Enochdhu, and rested in the Pass an hour, ere they went on to Kinloch. And, while they rested, one of the singers sang to Don a song of the world beyond the Glen, of the joys of the great city, its glitter and glamour and glory, and the charm of its fair women. The singer was true, and ere he ended, passed to minor and sang the dirge of life. The wail of the city came to our ears and beat in the heart of God. But the shoot of the White Rose did not hear it.

From that day Don Sinclair was doomed.

I have heard that, in the North of Europe, there are deer which, once in their lifetime, must drink of the sea. You can watch them, as they graze in the fields, lift their heads and look towards the North, then move a few paces forward. And the shep-

The Sea ! The Sea !

herds, keeping watch, know that the thirst has risen within them. One by one, they toss their heads in the air, and gaze northward, and move toward the sea. Slowly at first, then with increasing speed, one begins to run, then another, and another, till the whole flock sets off, panting and longing, straight for the salt sea. On, on, till their trot becomes a gallop, and their gallop a break-neck pace. On, regardless of hunger and danger. On, o'er hill and dale, past stream and flood, till they come to the sea. Then they take one long, deep draught of the salt water, and are satisfied. It is no use holding them back ; they would only pine and die. To the sea they must go, once the thirst has risen within them.

On this wise was it with young Don. A thirst for the city rose within him that only its waters could quench. The song went singing through his heart till longing overmastered him. He sought to drive it out, but ever it returned with conquering might. Whether at work or play, he heard the

The Sea ! The Sea !

music of the city, and the laughter of fair women. Whether on hill or moor, he saw its glitter, and glamour, and glory. Whether with the Dominie, in the Pass or at the grave, he heard a voice calling, "Drink ! Drink of our deep waters !" He closed his ears to the cry, but the voice rose from within his own soul.

Soon the peace of the Glen became unendurable. The restraints of home galling. The life of the clachan tame. The lips of the sweetest maid as naught. Then, his world became too small. "Room ! Room !" cried his captive life. 'Twas as if he lay astrand by a tiny stream, while his whole soul longed for the open sea. Or as if he called for a draught from cooling spring, and you gave him vinegar mingled with gall. And, day by day, the longing grew. And, night by night, the city filled his dream.

He must go.

What though it wound his father at the heart, and darken his eventide ? What though the waters prove not satisfying ?

The Sea! The Sea!

What though he sink in the sunlit sea!
What though the music turn to discord, and
the glory fade away, and sorrow, heavy-
laden, conscience-tost, sweep his soul? No
matter!

“The sea! The sea!”

And so, one Sabbath eve, he stole to the
grave on the hill, snatched a white rose, and
ran away.

.
“Next time he stole to that grave?”

“Ah! ——”

My God! My God! Why hast Thou
given such memories to men?

.
The Dominie stood at the gate that Sab-
bath eve, and waited. I see him, in the star-
light of the summer night, straining his eyes
gazing along the Faskally road. Don was
already past Kinlochry in haste for the great
city. And the Dominie waited in vain.

Don's going was to the Dominie like the
fading of the White Rose. So long as he
was with him, she looked at him from his

The Sea! The Sea!

face. Year by year the likeness had grown, till now the lad was like the maid whose heart he had won by the garden well. He had looked on him with growing joy. He had watched the bud break into flower. He had found his love anew. But now the vision vanished from his sight. And the earth in the grave grew cold.

Henceforth, he leant more heavily on his staff. And, henceforth, the hill became, more and more, the bourne whither he wended his weary steps.

There was not a bairn in the Glen but wept for him. They knew nothing of the great city, and little of sin, but they hated it with all their hearts when they saw the sorrow Don's going had wrought. Even "Rover," the old brown collie, came to feel some vicarious pain, and walked behind his master with fallen tail. Ah! the pity of the dog as it followed him up the hill! It knew the sound of tears!

Life was lonely now. And its only hope lay along the Faskally Road. Oft in the

The Sea! The Sea!

twilight of a summer day, and oft in the gloom of winter, have I seen him standing at the schule-house gate looking along the road with longing eyes. For seven long years he looked. And all the Glen knew that all that time, day or night, the schule-house door was never shut. And the fire in the hearth never burnt out. The Dominie was sure he would come.

If you must look within the open door, creep to it quietly. And let the night be dark. Look.

An empty chair one side the glowing hearth. And by it, an empty stool. And by that, "Rover" lying, gazing into the fire with one eye for his master. And, opposite, an old man whose hair is turning to snow. He is reading a book; Plato you may be sure. Listen—

" 'And is not God truly good? And must not He be represented as such?' queried Socrates.

" 'Certainly,' answered Adeimantus.

" 'And no good thing is hurtful?'

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“ ‘ No, indeed.’

“ ‘ And that which is not hurtful hurts not ?’

“ ‘ Certainly not.’

“ ‘ And that which hurts not does no evil ?’

“ ‘ No.’

“ ‘ And can that which does no evil be a cause of evil ?’

“ ‘ Impossible.’

“ ‘ And the good is advantageous ?’

“ ‘ Yes.’

“ ‘ And therefore the cause of well-being ?’

“ ‘ Yes.’

“ ‘ It follows, therefore, that the good is not the cause of all things, but of good only ?’

“ ‘ Assuredly.’

“ ‘ Then God, if He be good, is not the author of all things, as the many assert, but He is the cause of a few things only, and not of most things that occur to men. For few are the goods of human life, and many are the evils, and the good is to be attri-

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buted to God alone ; of the evils the causes are to be sought elsewhere, and not in Him.' ”

Here I heard the Dominie sigh. He was silent a long time before he went on again.

“ ‘ The gods are not magicians who transform themselves, neither do they deceive mankind in any way. ’

“ ‘ I grant that. ’

“ ‘ Then, although we are admirers of Homer, we do not admire the lying dream which Zeus sends to Agamemnon ; neither will we praise the verses of Aeschylus in which Thetis says that Apollo at her nuptials—

“ ‘ Was celebrating in song her fair progeny, whose days were to be long, and to know no sickness. And when he had spoken of my lot, as in all things blessed of heaven, he raised a note of triumph and cheered my soul. And I thought that the world of Phoebus, being divine and full of prophecy, would not fail. And now he himself who uttered the strain, he who was pre-

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sent at the banquet, and who said this—he it is who has slain my son?

“ ‘These are the kind of sentiments about the gods which will arouse our anger. And he who utters them shall be refused a chorus.’ ” *

Here the Dominie lifted his eyes from the book and looked toward the empty stool. “Rover” saw, and rose, and came, and laid his paw on the Dominie’s knee.

“We maun wait, an’ wait, Rover. . . . He’ll come. He’ll come!”

And “Rover” looked up into his master’s face, and, for answer, made a low, sympathetic cry.

Then the Dominie’s head fell on his breast, and his lips moved silently.

Creep away! Creep away! A soul is praying. A child-spirit is talking to the Father.

* See Dr. Jowett’s *Republic of Plato*, pp. 62, 67.

V.

THE SNOW-WHITE CHRIST.

THERE are few preachers who can take with grace a criticism of their sermons, and few poets whom a word of depreciation does not wound to the quick. Yet such criticisms, when wise and just, are of more value to poet and preacher than fine gold. So the old Dominie thought; and, believing in his thought with all his heart, he scattered his gold with a free hand. The young minister and Alan Gordon were the objects of his care, and God, who knows the hearts of all men, knows that only his Grecian perspective of beauty and truth, coupled with his desire for their perfecting, led the old man to give them of his treasure. But they did not always see the gold.

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The young minister woke his criticism at two points. Zealous only for the entrance of his word to the hearts of the people, he thought little of literary form. The old Dominie was too wise not to see the grace which love and passion alone can give to speech, but he held that beauty in all its forms must be sought. Language to him was sacred: the turn of a sentence or phrase a matter of duty. With the fine judgment of a Greek, and the deep feeling of a saint, he called on the young minister to give his best to God.

“In the Sanctuary ye maun mak’ yir words beautiful. Yir prayers especially should be pleasin’ tae the Ear as weel as tae the Hert o’ God. For, surely, He loves the beautiful Wha made sae mony bonnie things.”

At another point the young minister exposed himself to the old master’s ire. I remember it especially in connection with a sermon he preached on the Prodigal Son. It was a beautiful sermon, full of tender feel-

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ing and spiritual yearning. There was scarce an eye that was not moist ; yet the old Dominie, though he himself was father of a prodigal, sat and frowned. His heart was pained to note what escaped the tear-dimmed eyes of others, that the young minister, in magnifying the love of God so much, had fallen into the sin of despising His justice. It was truly so, and the old Dominie, with his fine sense of fitness and nigh perfect poise of mind, rose in defence of the Divine nature.

“ God is just, as weel as mercifu’, holy, as weel as loving. Ye maunna pluck the Hert oot o’ Him an’ say ‘It’s fu’ o’ love,’ for it’s fu’ o’ justice tae. The Hert o’ God is a bigger, grander Thing than the mind o’ man can think. Justice, in His eye, is as bonnie as Love.”

The young minister was wont to take these criticisms with humble grace. But with Alan it was different sometimes. Over him from early boyhood, the old Dominie had watched with special tenderness. With true insight

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the master had noted the gift of the scholar, and had drawn it out so well that now the eye of the world beheld it also. And the scholar was not slow to see the wisdom of the master, or to court his counsel in his fame. Thus it came to pass that on many summer evenings you might have seen the young poet with the old Dominie wandering about the woods or lying among the heather fondly discussing the products of his genius. They were twin souls, though Time had set a gulf between them.

Once, however, they quarrelled. Alan had written a dramatic poem that the Dominie had severely criticised. It was a beautiful phantasy in the true Keltic spirit, with pretty lights and glowing colours, steeped in a weird atmosphere of romance.

The interest, I remember, centred round an angel who kissed the hand of Christ, and said,

“I will get me down to earth, and take the form of a woman, and proclaim Thy glory. Then will men look on me, and hearken to

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my words, and be persuaded, and honour Thee!"

She came with the breath of Spring, and entered the soul of a sweet-faced nun, and spoke to men with winning speech. But they only looked on the pretty face, and smiled, and passed her by. Thus till Summer fled, and the world had spent its crimson and gold.

Then an old priest came along and stooped to listen to her words. But, when he heard her, he cried,

"Thou blasphemest! Thou dost not tell the tale of Holy Church! Thou must die!"

Then he took her and cast her into the fire.

But, lo, she would not burn.

And, as the people that stood by looked with wonder, behold, the priest himself was drawn into the flames.

Then the sweet-faced nun gave place to the angel, and rose out of the fire, and winged her flight toward heaven, till lost in the glory of the dying day.

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"Whit does it mean?" asked the Dominie.

The poet opened his eyes in astonishment. No doubt his poetic soul penetrated depths and looked on glories beyond the vision of the old Dominie, but what the poem meant he could not tell in a moment.

"Is't a jingle o' words? Has a man born in Enochdhu been guilty o' committin' the great sin o' makin' a poem wi' nae sense?"

The Dominie spoke without thinking of the poet's feelings. He thought Alan would understand him, and take from his irony the gold it contained. But the base metal entered the poet's soul, and rankled sorely. The Dominie had never spoken thus before.

"Weel, whit does it mean?" the Dominie went on, rising from the heather and limping down the hill. "It's no the dainty phrasin' I'm objecting tae, for Horace knew that trick langsyne, an' the young minister has just lent me ane, Alfred Tennyson, wha has learnt the trick richt weel. An' it's no the quaint legend o' the lass I'm thraun wi',

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for I like Homer a' the better for his myths.
But it's the sense I canna' grip."

The poet caught his breath, but was too sorely wounded to explain.

And so they parted.

Had the old Dominie seen that his words had pierced the soul of Alan, he would have limped after him, and cast his arms round his neck, and taken them back with tears. But he took his confusion to mean a confession that a man born in Enochdhu had been guilty of committing the great sin.

The breach widened till it came to pass that these two men, who would have died for each other, would not speak. When a month had sped (oh, of what misery to both), the Dominie tried to make it up, but Time had not yet closed the wound. Another month passed, and, though signs of healing appeared, no union took place. When the purple heather bloomed on the Ben, and the Pass was a mass of crimson and gold, they took to haunting the spots their love had consecrated. But, when they

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met, the only sign of recognition was on the part of the Dominie's dog. At a bend of the Pass, old Rover would run ahead of his master to meet Alan, and the poet would stroke and fondle him, whispering "Dear old Rover," till the collie leapt and barked with joy. But when the old Dominie appeared, he would, at once, resume his way, reading his book (upside down), and pass him by without a sign.

So it went on till the leaves fell, and Winter clothed the Glen with snow. And there is no telling how long it would have lasted had it not been for the coming of a first-born child.

It happened thus. The wee doctor and Kirsty, the foster-mother of the Glen, were upstairs with Janet, and Alan himself, alone, was pacing the study floor, waiting for the wail that would proclaim him father. The cry of Janet's pain fell on his ear and tore at his heart. Then there came a long lull, in which Janet slumbered. In the hush

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the wearied poet dropped to sleep. And, as he slept, he dreamt this dream.

“It was dark, toward dawn. A golden bolt darted from beyond Ben Vrackie and came shooting up the strath. In tens, in hundreds, in thousands, the lightning messengers of Day sped towards him ere the sun rose in glory. Spring had been beforehand, and tipped the Glen with green, And, as Alan gazed on the green shoots bathed in the splendour of morn, the buds on the trees opened, and lo, on every new-born leaf was the white face of the Infant-Redeemer. As Alan looked with wonder on the sight, the leaves closed into buds again, the Babe smiling sweetly the while. And, immediately the Child was lost to sight, darkness came on once more.

“In the darkness, Alan’s spirit waited, full of awe and wonder. Slowly the veil lifted, and lo, Summer had come. The air was laden with the humming of bees and the scent of wild roses. Through the Pass came the young folk of Enochdhu, making

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love in the merry sunshine. With a sweet maid came Don the Dominie's son, smiling happily on her love-lit eyes, and kissing passionately the roses that grew on her cheeks. And they were both clad in white. It was a fair sight, and, as Alan looked at them, lo, every sunbeam that fell on their faces was laden with a vision of the Boy Jesus. He followed them through the Pass, in raiment of dazzling light. And, when they had gone from view, lo, a great darkness again fell on the land.

"Smitten with love and fear, Alan's spirit waited, conscious of something impending. And, as he waited, a pale moon rose in the sky, and flooded the Strath with light. It was autumn: the hills were brown and purple. The old Dominie came hobbling through the woods, and his face was laden with woe. 'O Lord,' he kept crying, 'dinna forsake him, an' bring him hame. . . . My house is left unto me desolate, desolate. . . . Woe is me, for even my poet-boy has wandered away.' So he kept crying, right through the Pass,

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till the sound of his mourning at length died away. Then Alan was conscious of two figures flitting among the shadows of the trees. The first was being pursued by the second, who kept gaining ground and searching diligently among the shadows. Once they came out into the open, and, as the moonlight fell on their faces, Alan recognised the Dominie's prodigal son fleeing from the Snow-White Christ. They passed from sight, lost in the shadows of some great black firs.

“Then the leaves of the forest faded and fell. The night grew bitterly cold. Great flakes of snow began to fall. They kept falling till the trees and the ground were covered. And, as they fell, the snowflakes seemed to be calling to him something he could not hear. Soon a snow-clad Figure came struggling through the Pass, battling bravely against wind and snow. On He came, and when He drew nigh, Alan heard Him calling—‘Come! I have need of thee!’ Then the voice of the snowflakes was clear to his

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ear ; they were all whispering—‘Come ! He hath need of thee !’ With all his senses on the alert, Alan now strained his eyes to watch the Snow-White Christ. On He came, with lighted face, and, as He climbed the path to where Alan was standing, He was seen to be carrying a wounded man. When the moan of the man, trembling with pain, mingled with the cry of the Christ and the snowflakes, Alan awoke. His heart was beating wildly, and his face was wet with tears.

Greatly wondering at his strange dream, the poet went to the window and looked out. Snowflakes were falling fast. At the sight of them something unaccountable stirred him : every snowflake, as it fell, whispered, “He hath need of thee !” He closed the shutters, and listened, but not a sound fell on his ear. He opened the shutters again, and each snowflake cried anew, “He hath need of thee—need of thee !”

Marvelling much, Alan put on his Highland cloak and went out. He came to the

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Queen's View in the Pass, and looked away along the path to the Garry Bridge. Everything was covered with snow that still kept falling in the moonlight. And, as he waited, through the Pass came two white figures hand in hand. On they came, step by step, slowly, against the wind and snow. On, till they came to where he stood. He started when he recognised them—the young minister and the old Dominie's prodigal son!

"The very man to finish the work," cried the minister, as they met. "Take him, Alan, and bring him to his father."

Alan took the trembling hand, and said,

"Come, Donal', let us gang hame thegither. Oor faither is waitin' for us baith!"

So they came together to the schule-house. A light was burning in the window. The door stood open. They entered. The Dominie ran to meet them.

"Twa prodigals," said Alan, "twa prodigals come hame, at last. . . . Come tae pray oor faither's forgiveness!"

"Donal', Donal', my son, my son," cried

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the old man, as he flung his arms round the neck of the wanderer.

And Donal' sobbed bitterly.

Alan turned his face, and wept, forbearing to look on the sight. The angels in Heaven were glad, and God's own heart was full of joy.

Anon, the Dominie came to him, kissed his cheek, and grasped his hand, and cried,

"Thou art welcome hame, my son! Thou art welcome hame. My hert 'll bleed nae mair for thee!"

There were tears in their eyes, but Joy was dancing wildly right behind them.

Thus they stood, till every tear had fled, and their faces were covered with smiles.

When Alan came home to his own cottage, the young minister was waiting for him in the study.

"How did you come to be there, Alan?" he asked.

Alan told him his strange dream.

The minister marvelled.

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“And how did you come to be there?”

Alan asked in turn

The young minister told him how, having heard of the prodigal's whereabouts in Glasgow, he had gone and found him, and wooed him home. They had come by the last train to Kinloch, and were walking thence, through the Pass, to Enochdhu, when they met Alan.

Scarce had the minister ended, when the sound of a tiny voice came through the ceiling.

“Hark!” cried the poet, leaping up with joy.

The young minister smiled and shook him by the hand.

A minute later, Kirsty opened the study door, and said,

“God hes gien ye a bonnie son, Alan, an’ they’re baith daein’ rael weel!”

VI.

"SUNSET AND EVENING STAR."

WHEN Don came home, the orb of the Dominie's life came to its setting.

Oft, from the mountain top, have I watched the sun pass through a tumult of clouds ere it came to its fall. Twice have I seen it, near the horizon, plunge into a great black mass through which it seemed it never could run. I have waited long, and turned me down the hill, at last, certain it had gone. And all the world was grey. Then, suddenly, the sun slipped from the cloud and lit the land again. And every mountain, and loch, and glen, became aflame with gold. Far as the eye could reach, further far than in broad light of day, the rays of the setting sun were seen to fire the

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darkening world. And, in this splendour have I watched the sun sink quietly to its setting, glorified ten times by the very clouds that threatened it.

So was it with the Dominie. Through the dark cloud of sorrow his life came smiling, and passed, in peace and glory, to its setting. For ten years after Don's return he tasted the joy of a cloudless sky. He was white-haired and deep-furrowed, but his foot was lighter, and his face gladder, and his thoughts aglow with hope. It was sunset all the time, and of great glory.

Now came out his secret sorrow, the grief that delayed so long his wooing, that we had failed to solve. Fergusson of Faskally proclaimed it to the Glen.

“There's aye a note o' music ayont the reach o' the sweetest singer, he fain wad tak' ; aye a purple star abune the sweep o' the greatest scientist, he fain wad see ; aye a gowden goblet in the life o' the maist successful man, he fain hed drank. An' this is the Dominie's. He belongs tae that

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fair company that fain had entered the Kirk,
wham Her creed whupped frae Her door.
Frae the womb his mither gied him tae her
Lord, an' frae her lap the boy lifted his life
tae His service. He went tae college an'
tried to fit himsel' for the work. But, before
he passed through 'the hall' he saw he couldna
sign the Westminster Confession, and gied
wy tae his younger brither that his mither
nicht hae her minister-son.

“An' frae that time (continued Fergusson
sadly, as if he felt the burden), the Dominie
hes looked on a poopit wi' a sair hert. An'
never dis he see the young minister speil the
poopit stair in Enochdhu but the yearnin' o'
his youth comes back. He's spanged a lang
an' happy life (save Don's wannert years),
much loved, much honoured, an' much used
in the Glen, but this disappointment hes aye
come atween. An' hed it no been for Nature,
an' the love o' Mirren Gray, his hert hed
lang syne been broken. This is the sang
he fain hed sang; the purple star he fain hed
seen; the gowden cup he fain hed drank.”

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“I’m thinkin’ he’s served the Lord gey weel, Ferg,” put in Gordon of Tomnamoan, “an’ made a graun poopit o’ the schule-hoose desk. I wadna mind chaingin’ places at the Judgment wi’ the Maister o’ Enochdhu.”

And the Glen nodded approval.

At heart profoundly religious, and true to Christ, in creed the Dominie drifted far from fellowship with any Church. As God, and his father, made him, veneration was the chief jewel in his crown : and it cast its pale light over all his thought. God, and Nature, and Man, were ever mysterious to him, great, and good, and holy, to be revered with awe. He walked softly. And, so far as he made himself, Plato perhaps influenced most his mode of thought. The earth throbbed with divinity : God passed in the summer-wind, and sat on the trembling bough, and leapt with the trout in the Garry, and lay on the bed of the dying. Yet there was darkness at noon-day. But, ere his sun set, the Dominie saw the mist lift from the hill, and was satisfied.

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Once in all his lifetime did I hear him pray. It was in the summer he passed up the hill. 'Twas the voice of a child-spirit talking to the Father-Spirit.

“Father, Father, Holy Father, Thy Name is too great, too wonderful, too high for me. And so high is Thy praise I cannot reach it. Thou art Thine Own praise: I am Thy reproach. Yet is my origin hidden in Thy Height. Therefore my depth lifteth itself up to Thee. For Thine Infinite Height is Thine Infinite Nearness. My very darkness is the burying-place of Thy Eternal Light. Move in my darkness and let Thy Love appear. And I shall gaze on Thee.

“Most Holy, Blessed Father, I worship Thee in Thine Only Begotten Son, Thy Life, Thy Image. Help me to keep Him before me as my aim and end, to be an image of Thy Image, to be a little son in the Life of Thy Son. Let Thy Life as it is in Him, open, and open, in me, that I may be conscious of Life in Thee. And let the unity of Thy Life well up in me, in my repentance, in my faith, in my reason, my imagination, my love, my fear, my praise, and in sensi-

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bilities and instincts which cannot be expressed, but which are the latent pulse of Thine unutterableness in the spirit of Thy child.

“If there be in Thy Eternity, before Thee, some One Body, or Kingdom of Thy children, not a division, not a tribe, not a party, but one that includes all, one that by affections and sympathies in common with all, offers sacrifices of thanksgiving for all, and communicates blessings to all, then I pray, if it seem good in Thy sight, that I may be associated with that Body.

“Or if there be a people made up of the innocent and the redeemed of all planets, systems, and their heavens, who being neither shut up in the limits of self-love, nor in the individuality of any one heaven, but who, heartily loving the whole outborn variety of Thy Love and Fulness, desire to include the utmost diversity of genius and character in their unity, then I desire and pray, in submission to Thy Holy Will, that I may be qualified for admission amongst that central, all-related, all-embracing people.

“Or, if it be rather for Thy glory, and for the good of all, that I be kept watching daily

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at the gates, and waiting at the posts of the doors of the least and outermost mansion of Thy Eternal House, then my only prayer is, Father, Thy Will be my Heaven. Amen.” *

In winters, when his scholars were snow-bound and “Rover” only kept him company, the Dominie’s soul had often dreamt of the great life beyond the Glen. Silence and snow made him think of the crowded city and the busy life of men. And there were times when his townsman’s soul longed for the bustle of a great throng. But long since Nature had overcome and shewn him the joy of a quiet life, and heaped her scorn on man’s fevered desire for wealth, place, and power.

“Dae yir duty quietly”, he kept saying through the years to generation after generation of scholars, “an’ learn this lesson weel that yir duty ever is tae serve others, God and Man—no yirsel’, no yirsel’. Behold the lilies how they grow, an’ lift yir eyes to the hills, whence cometh a’ oor aid.”

* See Dr. John Pulsford’s *Supremacy of Man*, p. 11.

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And now his only wish was that he might die at his desk in the auld schule-house, with his face towards the westering sun, in sound of the babbling Garry, with blackbirds piping in the Pass and scent of white roses coming through the open windows.

“Oh, it’ll be graun’ tae wauken amang the hills,” he cried, “wi’ the sun climbin’ up Ben Vrackie an’ the sound o’ the Garry risin’ tae oor ears!”

And, when the summer was far spent,

“Methinks I hear already the tinklin’ o’ the priestly bell, an’ the laughter o’ the bairns as they run tae schule! For, I’m thinkin’ that in the life tae come we’ll each ane perfect the work begun ablow. . . . An’ failures ’ll get their chance!”

And again, when the sun was setting,

“Whit an education it ’ll be when we see Truth face tae face, an’ the Great School-Master is near tae explain. ‘Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known’!”

Often in those days, as the sun drew near

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the horizon, Alan Gordon came and read to him. His joy in the poets was keen to the end. And over anything new, throbbing with faith, or beating with love, or glowing with fine feeling, he went into ecstasy. But, ever he came back to Plato, and last of all, to Thomas Carlyle. And, ere he left, Alan had always to read “The Everlasting Yea.” And aye when he came to this great passage, the Dominie rose, and slapped his knee with joy :

“Es leuchtet mir ein : I see a glimpse of it : there is in man a HIGHER than Love of Happiness : he can do without Happiness, and instead thereof find Blessedness ! Was it not to preach-forth this same HIGHER that sages and martyrs, the Poet and the Priest, in all times, have spoken and suffered, bearing testimony through life and through death, of the God-like that is in Man, and how in the God-like only has he Strength and Freedom ? Which God-inspired Doctrine art thou also honoured to be taught ; O Heavens ! and broken with manifold merciful Afflictions, even till thou become con-

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trite, and learn it! O thank Thy destiny for these; thankfully bear what yet remain: thou hadst need of them; the Self in thee needed to be annihilated. By benignant fever-paroxysms is Life rooting out the deep-seated chronic Disease, and triumphs over Death. On the roaring billows of Time, thou art not engulfed, but borne aloft into the azure of Eternity. Love not Pleasure; love God. This is the EVER-LASTING YEA, wherein all contradiction is solved; wherein whoso walks and works, it is well with him.”

After this, there was a long silence, and Alan read no more. But, ere he left, the Master himself repeated from heart this further passage. And his voice was gentle with far-off memories and far-reaching hopes.

“It is with man’s Soul as it was with Nature: the beginning of Creation is—Light. Till the eye have vision, the whole members are in bonds. Divine moment, when over the tempest-tost Soul, as once over the wild-weltering Chaos, it is spoken: Let there be Light! Ever to the greatest

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that has felt such moment, is it not miraculous and God-announcing ; even as, under simpler figures, to the simplest and least. The mad primeval Discord is hushed ; the rudely-jumbled conflicting elements bind themselves into separate Firmaments ; deep, silent rock-foundations are built beneath ; and the skyey vault with its everlasting Luminaries above : instead of a dark wasteful Chaos, we have a blooming, fertile, heaven-encompassed World.”

And in the joy that followed, Alan crept away.

When the sun sank to the horizon, the Dominie’s soul rose heavenward. And his heart was full of hope in God, and love to men, and larger creeds. The Glen bent its head and wondered.

“Never doubt God!” he kept saying ; “never doubt God ! However keen the pain, however deep the mystery, however hard to understand. Is na God ALL-WISE ? An’ will na He do right ? The Heavens declare His wonders. The Earth His Wis-

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dom. The Sea His Might. Bow down!
Bow down! Stand in awe! Stand in awe!”

And again—

“Show peety, man, show peety tae every
child o’ man! Let no creed stifle the love
o’ yir hert, no word choke the holy com-
passions. Love is of God! And His
mercy endureth forever!”

He did not die: he “gaed awa.” It was
late one summer day. The schule had
skailed. The rays of the setting sun were
streaming through the open windows. The
air was laden with the scent of roses and the
peace of Eventide. I called at the schule-
hoose to see him. He sat at his desk in a
glory of sunshine. His hair was white as
snow. His face aglow with light. I read to
him an hour and spoke with him awhile: his
speech was like a lullaby.

Then I bade him goodnight.

He gave me his hand. I felt it tremble,
and saw the sleep come in his eyes, and
went away. But, before I reached the gate,
I shivered, and went back.

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His head lay on his Plato, and his right hand on an open Testament. The sun had set. And, through the open windows, came the sound of the babbling Garry and the song of blackbirds piping in the Pass. The scent of white roses filled the room.

I lifted his head gently. His Plato was open at a passage on “The Immortality of the Soul,” soiled with much fingering. And the Testament had these words underlined :

“In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you.”

In the margin I found this reference, “cp. Jno. x. 16.” I looked it up and was glad. “Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold : them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice ; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd.”

On the third day we carried him up the hill. The pipers from the Castle played his funeral march, and all the Glen followed in his wake, a long and winding company of men behind his sad-eyed scholars. Have

“Sunset and Evening Star.”

you heard the bagpipes wail their shrill lament with mourners toiling up the mountain pass? Have you heard the muffled echoes moan their sadness back again? Have you felt the mountains lift their might of sorrow? If not, you have not heard the weirdest note of Death. I hear the bagpipes even now! I see the long procession still! I feel the mountains' sadness! And my heart is filled with woe.

Last summer I toiled up the hill once more. My steps were slow, and my hand leaned heavily on my staff: I am just as old as the Dominie when he “gaed awa.” I entered the kirkyard, and made for his grave. But, before I came to it, I lifted myself on my staff, and looked.

Don was there before me. He was on his knees pruning the old white-rose. His hand was very gentle, and his face was softened with sorrow. Anon the knife was still, and I heard a long low sob of anguish.

“My father! my father!”

“Sunset and Evening Star.”

**I turned, and stole away, and crept down
the hill with wounded heart.**

**And, when I reached the Glen, I lifted my
face to the sky, and saw the Evening Star.**

THE END.



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